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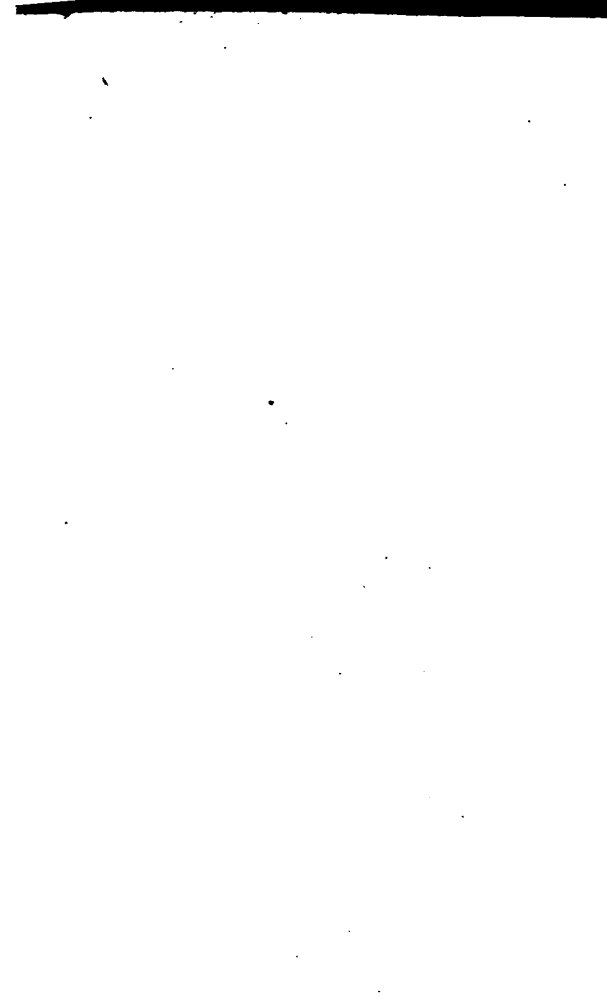


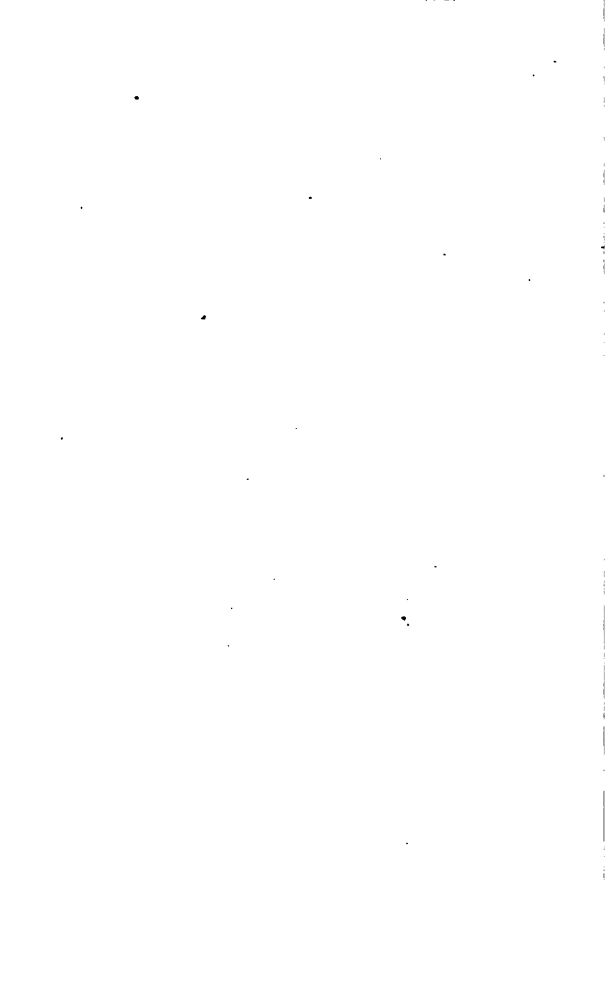










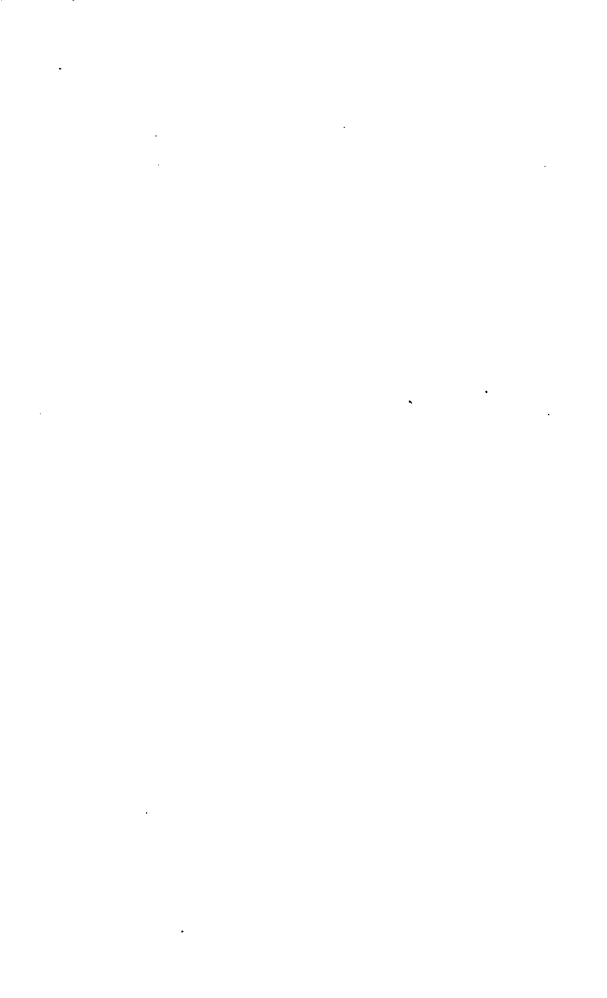


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EPISTLES.

VOL. VI.

Whittingham's Edition.



ELEGANT EXTRACTS

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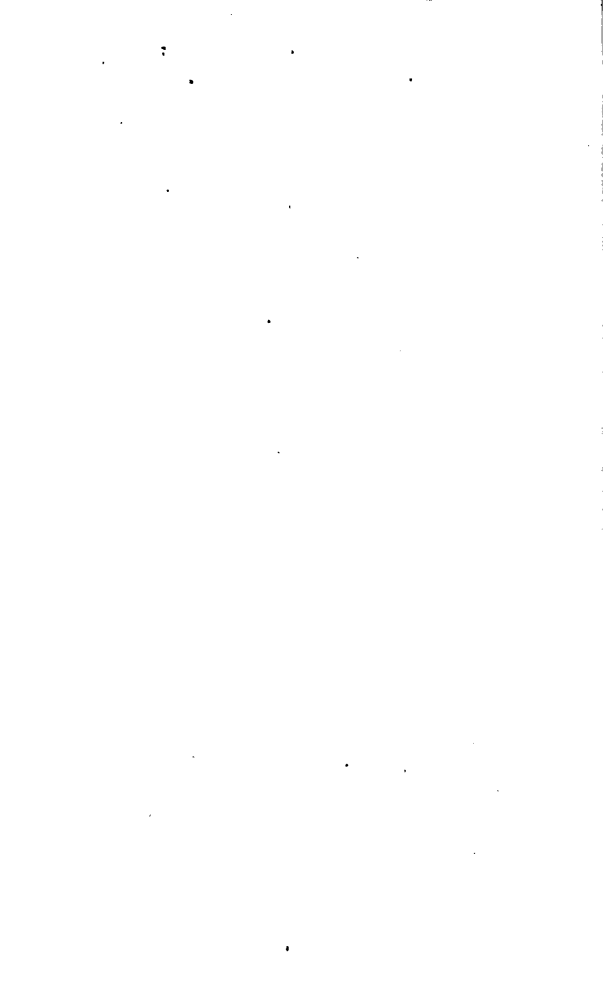
PART XI.
LETTERS.



The barber, the schoolmaster, and the drummer of a corps, &c. p. 173.

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1827.



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NEW ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

A

UNIQUE SELECTION,

MORAL, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING,

FROM THE MOST EMINENT

Prose and Epistolary Writers.

BY

R. A. DAVENPORT, ESQ.

EDITOR OF WHITTINGHAM'S EDITION OF THE BRITISH POETS.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VI.

LETTERS.

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ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

PART XI.

Letters,

OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

DAVID HUME TO MATTHEW SHARP, ESQ.

Welde Hall, near St. Alban's, April 25th, 1745.

MY DEAR SIR,

I AM informed that such a popular clamour has been raised against me in Edinburgh, on account of scepticism, heterodoxy, and other hard names, which confound the ignorant, that my friends find some difficulty in working out the point of my professorship, which once appeared so easy. Did I need a testimonial for my orthodoxy, I should certainly appeal to you; for you know that I always imitated Job's friends, and defended the cause of Providence, when you attacked it on account of the headaches you felt after a debauch. But, as a more particular explication of that particular seems superfluous, I shall only apply to you for a renewal of your good offices

with your nephew, Lord Tinwel, whose interest with Yeths and Allan may be of service to me. There is no time to lose ; so that I must beg you to be speedy in writing to him or speaking to him on that head. A word to the wise, even that is not necessary to a friend such as I have always esteemed and found you to be.

I live here very comfortably with the Marquis of Annandale, who, I suppose you have heard, sent me a letter of invitation, along with a bill of 100*l.*, about two months ago. Every thing is much better than I expected from the accounts I heard after I came to London. For the secrecy with which I stole away from Edinburgh, and which I thought necessary for preserving my interest there, kept me entirely ignorant of his situation : my lord never was in so good a way before. He has a regular family, honest servants, and every thing is managed genteelly and with economy ; he has entrusted all his English affairs to a mighty honest friendly man, Captain Vincent, who is cousin-german to the marchioness. And, as my lord has now taken as strong a turn to solitude and repose as he formerly had to company and agitation, 'tis to be hoped that his good parts and excellent dispositions may at last, being accompanied with more health and tranquillity, render him a comfort to his friends, if not an ornament to his country. As you live in the neighbourhood of the marchioness, it may give her a pleasure to hear these particulars. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO MATTHEW SHARP, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Edinburgh, 25th Feb. 1754.

I HAVE enclosed this letter under one to my friend Mr. Blacklock *, who has retired to Dumfries, and proposes to reside there for some time. His character and situation are, no doubt, known to you, and challenge the greatest regard from every one who has either good taste or sentiments of humanity. He has printed a collection of poems, which his friends are endeavouring to turn to the best account for him. Had he published them in the common way, their merit would have recommended them sufficiently to common sale; but, in that case, the greatest part of the profit would have redounded to the booksellers. His friends, therefore, take copies from him, and distribute them among their acquaintances. The poems, if I have the smallest judgment, are, many of them, extremely beautiful, and all of them remarkable for correctness and propriety. Every man of taste, from the merit of the performance, would be inclined to purchase them; every benevolent man, from the situation of the author, would wish to encourage him: and as for those who have neither taste nor benevolence, they should be forced, by importunity, to do good against their will. I must, therefore, recommend it to you to send for a cargo of these poems, which the author's great modesty will prevent

* The celebrated blind poet, whose amiable disposition and uncommon vivacity rendered him a general favourite.

him from offering to you, and to engage your acquaintance to purchase them.

But, dear sir, I would fain go further. I would fain presume upon our friendship (which now begins to be ancient between us) and recommend to your civilities a man who does honour to his country by his talents, and disgraces it by the little encouragement he has hitherto met with. He is a man of very extensive knowledge, and of singular good dispositions; and his poetical, though very much to be admired, is the least part of his merit. He is very well qualified to instruct youth, by his acquaintance both with the languages and sciences; and possesses so many arts of supplying the want of sight, that the imperfection would be no hinderance. Perhaps he may entertain some such project in Dumfries, and be assured you could not do your friends a more real service than by recommending them to him. Whatever scheme he may choose to embrace, I was desirous you should be prepossessed in his favour, and be willing to lend him your countenance and protection, which, I am sensible, would be of great advantage to him.

Since I saw you, I have not been idle. I have endeavoured to make some use of the library*, which was entrusted to me, and have employed myself in a composition of British history, beginning with the union of the two crowns. I have finished the reign of James and Charles, and will soon send them to the press. I have

* The Advocates' Library, in which, for a time, Mr. Hume held a situation.

the impudence to pretend that I am of no party, and have no bias. Lord Elibank says that I am a moderate Whig, and Mr. Wallace, that I am a candid Tory.

I was extremely sorry that I could not recommend your friend to director Hume, as Mr. Cummin desired me. I have never exchanged a word with that gentleman since I carried Jemmy Kirkpatrick to him, and our acquaintance has entirely dropped. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate friend and humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO DR. ADAM SMITH.

1759.

I GIVE you thanks for the agreeable present of your Theory ("The Theory of Moral Sentiments"). Wedderburn and I made presents of our copies to such of our acquaintances as we thought good judges, and proper to spread the reputation of the book. I sent one to the duke of Argyle, to Lord Lyttleton, Horace Walpole, Soame Jenyns, and Burke, an Irish gentleman, who wrote lately a very pretty Treatise on the Sublime. Millar desired my permission to send one in your name to Dr. Warburton. I have delayed writing to you till I could tell something of the success of the book, and could prognosticate with some probability, whether it should be finally damned to oblivion, or should be registered in the temple of immortality. Though it has been published only a few weeks, I think there

appears already such strong symptoms, that I can almost venture to foretell its fate. It is in short this ——. But I have been interrupted in my letter by a foolish impertinent visit of one who has lately come from Scotland. He tells me that the university of Glasgow intend to declare Ronet's office vacant, upon his going abroad with Lord Hope. I question not but you will have our friend Ferguson in your eye, in case another project for procuring him a place in the university of Edinburgh should fail. Ferguson has very much polished and improved his Treatise on Refinement, and with some amendments it will make an admirable book, and discovers an elegant and a singular genius. The Epigoniad, I hope, will do; but it is somewhat up-hill work. As I doubt not but you consult the Reviews sometimes at present, you will see in the Critical Review a letter upon that poem; and I desire you to employ your conjectures in finding out the author. Let me see a sample of your skill in knowing hands by your guessing at the person. I am afraid of Lord Kame's Law Tracts. A man might as well think of making a fine sauce by a mixture of wormwood and aloes, as an agreeable composition by joining metaphysics and Scotch law. However, the book, I believe, has merit, though few people will take the pains of diving into it.

But to return to your book, and its success in this town, I must tell you ——. A plague of interruption! I ordered myself to be denied,—and yet here is one that has broke in upon me again. He is a man of letters, and we have had

a great deal of literary conversation. You told me that you were curious of literary anecdotes, and therefore I shall inform you of a few that have come to my knowledge. I believe I have mentioned to you already Helvetius's book *De l'Esprit*. It is worth your reading, not for its philosophy, which I do not highly value, but for its agreeable composition. I had a letter from him a few days ago, wherein he tells me that my name was much oftener in the manuscript, but that the censor of books at Paris obliged him to strike it out. Voltaire has lately published a small work called *Candide, ou l'Optimisme*. I shall give you a detail of it.—But what is all this to my book? you say. My dear Mr. Smith, have patience: compose yourself to tranquillity: show yourself a philosopher in practice as well as profession. Think on the emptiness, and rashness, and futility of the common judgments of men: how little they are regulated by reason in any subject, much more in philosophical subjects, which so far exceed the comprehension of the vulgar:—

—— Non si quid turbida Roma
Elevet, accedas; examenve improbum in illa
Castiges trutina: nec te quæsiveris extra.

A wise man's kingdom is his own breast; or, if he looks farther, it will only be to the judgment of a select few, who are free from prejudices, and capable of examining his work. Nothing indeed can be a stronger presumption of falsehood than the approbation of the multitude; and Phocion, you know, always suspected himself of some

blunder, when he was attended with the applauses of the populace.

Supposing, therefore, that you have duly prepared yourself for the worst by all these reflections, I proceed to tell you the melancholy news, that your book has been very unfortunate ; for the public seem disposed to applaud it extremely. It was looked for by the foolish people with some impatience ; and the mob of literati are already beginning to be very loud in its praises. Three bishops called yesterday at Millar's shop, in order to buy copies, and to ask questions about the author. The bishop of Peterborough said he had passed the evening in a company where he heard it extolled above all the books in the world. The duke of Argyle is more decisive than he uses to be in its favour. I suppose he either considers it an exotic, or thinks the author will be serviceable to him in the Glasgow elections. Lord Lyttleton says, that Robertson and Smith and Bower are the glories of English literature. Oswald protests he does not know whether he has reaped more instruction or entertainment from it. But you may easily judge what reliance can be put on his judgment, who has been engaged all his life in public business, and who never sees any faults in his friends. Millar exults and brags that two thirds of the edition are already sold, and that he is now sure of success. You see what a son of the earth that is, to value books only by the profit they bring him. In that view, I believe it may prove a good book.

Charles Townshend, who passes for the clever-

est fellow in England, is so taken with the performance, that he said to Oswald he would put the duke of Buccleugh under the author's care, and would make it worth his while to accept of that charge. As soon as I heard this, I called on him twice, with a view of talking with him about the matter, and of convincing him of the propriety of sending that young nobleman to Glasgow: for I could not hope that he could offer you any terms which would tempt you to renounce your professorship; but I missed him. Mr. Townshend passes for being a little uncertain in his resolutions; so perhaps you need not build much on this sally.

In recompense for so many mortifying things, which nothing but truth could have extorted from me, and which I could easily have multiplied to a greater number, I doubt not but you are so good a Christian as to return good for evil; and to flatter my vanity by telling me, that all the godly in Scotland abuse me for my account of John Knox and the Reformation. I suppose you are glad to see my paper end, and that I am obliged to conclude with, your humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE
BOUFFLERS.

Compeigne, 14th July, 1764.

I SHALL venture to say, dear madam, that no letter, which even you have ever wrote, conveyed more satisfaction than did that with which you favoured me. What pleasure to receive

testimonies and assurances of good will from a person whom we highly value, and whose sentiments are of such importance to us! You could not possibly have done an action more charitable than to speak to me in so friendly a manner. You have thereby supplied me for a long time with matter for the most agreeable musing: and I shall henceforth, I hope, bid defiance to all returns of diffidence and jealousy. I confess with shame that I am but too subject to this sentiment, even in friendship. I never doubt of my friend's probity or honour; but often of his attachment to me, and sometimes, as I have afterwards found, without reason. If such was my disposition even in youth, you may judge that, having arrived at a time of life when I can less expect to please, I must be more subject to inroads of suspicion. Common sense requires that I should keep at a distance from all attachments that can imply passion. But it must surely be the height of folly, to lay myself at the mercy of a person whose situation seems calculated to inspire doubt, and who, being so little at her own disposal, could not be able, even if willing, to seek such remedies as might appease that tormenting sentiment.

Should I meet with one, in any future time (for to be sure I know of none such at present), who was endowed with graces and charms beyond all expression, whose character and understanding were equally an object of esteem, as her person was of tenderness; I ought to fly her company, to avoid all connexion with her, even such as might bear the name of friendship; and

to endeavour to forget her as soon as possible. I know not if it would be prudent even to bid her adieu : surely, it would be highly imprudent to receive from her any testimonies of friendship and regard. But who, in that situation, could have resolution to reject them ? Who would not drink up the poison with joy and satisfaction ?

But let us return, dear madam, from imaginary suppositions to our real selves. I am much pleased that your leisure allows you to betake yourself to your old occupation of reading ; and that your relish for it still remains entire. I have frequently, in the course of my life, met with interruptions, from business and dissipation ; yet always returned to my closet with pleasure. I have no other prospect for easing the burthen of old age than in these enjoyments ; and if I sometimes join the chimerical project of relaxing the severities of study, by the society of a person dear to me, and who could have indulgence for me, I consider it a pleasing dream, in which I can repose no confidence. My only comfort is, that I am myself a person free as the air we breathe, and that, wherever such a blessing might present itself, I could there fix my habitation.

You tell me, that, though you are still exposed to the attacks of melancholy, it is of the softer kind, and such as you would not desire to be rid of. I shall not, any further than you allow me, indulge my conjectures. You were offended at my former ones, and I wish they may be false. But it is impossible for my thoughts not to return often to a subject in which I am so deeply interested. If there are any obstacles to your happi-

ness, I should wish they were of a nature that could be removed; and that they admitted of some other remedy than the one you sometimes mention, on which I cannot think without terror. I feel the reflection this instant, as the stroke of a poniard at my heart; and the tear at present starts in my eye when it recurs to me. Is it necessary that my sympathy too should furnish you with arms against me?

But I perceive, dear madam, or shall I say my amiable pupil, that while I am answering the second part of your letter, I have entirely forgot the first; which yet surely is not of a nature wholly indifferent to me.

It gives me a sensible uneasiness that my friend's performance has not gained your approbation. I am more sorry on his account, than because you condemn my judgment, which I am sensible may easily be warped by friendship and partiality. I acknowledge too, that most of your objections, and indeed all of them, are well founded. I could add some others, which a more frequent perusal of the piece has suggested to me. I always disliked the character of Glenalvon, as being that of such a finished and black villain as either is not in nature, or requires very little genius in the poet to have imagined. Such a personage seems only to be a gross artifice in the writer, when the plot requires an incident, which he knows not how to introduce naturally. Glenalvon is a kind of *Diabolus ex machina*; more blamable than the *Deus ex machina*, which the ancient critics condemned as an unartificial manner of unravelling a plot. But though I allow

all these objections, and more which would occur to you on a second perusal, I cannot still but flatter myself that the tragedy of Douglas is a work of merit, from the sensible pathetic which runs through the whole. The value of a theatrical piece can less be determined by an analysis of its conduct, than by the ascendant which it gains over the heart, and by the strokes of nature which are interspersed through it. But I am afraid that it has not affected you to the degree I could wish, even in this particular, and that you have not found in it any such beauties as can compensate for its defects.

If such be your judgment on a second perusal (for you must allow me to appeal from your first judgment to your second, and I shall surely never think of any other appeal), if such, I say, be the case, I can do nothing but acquiesce. Your nation, your sex, and, above all, the peculiar delicacy of your taste, give you a title to pronounce on these subjects.

I can even kiss the hand, with pleasure and passion, which signs the verdict against me: I could only have kissed it with more pleasure, had it acquitted my friend.

Allow me, dear madam, before I bid you adieu (since it is necessary to come to that at last), to ask you, whether you do not come to Paris about the middle of August, and stay there for some time? My question proceeds not merely from curiosity, I could wish to enjoy your company before the return of winter recalls us to our former dissipations.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE
BOUFFLERS.

I COULD never yet accuse myself, dear madam, of hypocrisy or dissimulation ; and I was surely guilty of these vices in the highest degree, if I wrote you a letter which carried with it any marks of indifference. What I said in particular, I cannot entirely recollect, but I well remember in general what I *felt*, which was a great regard and attachment to you, not increased indeed (for that was scarce possible), but rendered more agreeable to myself, from the marks you had given me of your friendship and confidence : I adhere to these ; I will never, but with my life, be persuaded to part with the hold which you have been pleased to afford me : you may cut me to pieces, limb by limb ; but like those pertinacious animals of my country, I shall expire still attached to you, and you will in vain attempt to get free. For this reason, madam, I set at defiance all those menaces, which you obliquely throw out against me. Do you seriously think that it is at present in your power to determine whether I shall be your friend or not ? In every thing else your authority over me is without control. But with your ingenuity, you will scarce contrive to use me so ill, that I shall not still better bear it : and after all, you will find yourself obliged, from pity, or generosity, or friendship, to take me back into your service. At least this will probably be the case, till you find one who loves you more sincerely and values you

more highly ; which, with all your merit, I fancy it will not be easy for you to do. I know that I am here furnishing you with arms against myself : you may be tempted to tyrannize over me, in order to try how far I will practise my doctrine of passive obedience : but I hope also that you will hold this soliloquy to yourself : This poor fellow, I see, is resolved never to leave me : let me take compassion on him ; and endeavour to render our intercourse as agreeable to him and as little burdensome to myself as possible. If you fall, madam, into this way of thinking, as you must at last, I ask no farther ; and all your menaces will vanish into smoke.

Good God ! how much am I fallen from the airs which I at first gave myself ! You may remember that a little after our *personal* acquaintance, I told you that you were obliged à *soutenir la gageure*, and could not in decency find fault with me, however I should think proper to behave myself. Now, I throw myself at your feet, and give you nothing but marks of patience and long suffering and submission. But I own that matters are at present upon a more proper and more natural footing ; and long may they remain so.

I went to Villars-Cotterets, as I told you, on Sunday last, and I stayed till Tuesday. Madam de Vierville arrived on Monday evening, whom I questioned about the manner of life at Staure. Nothing could be more ravishing, more delightful than her description of it, and of the person who inspired gaiety and amenity into all around her. And can you treat me with contempt be-

cause I am willing to be that person's slave? For, let me tell you, there is an expression in your letter against slavery, which I take a little to myself, as said against me ; but I still maintain—

Nunquam libertas gratior extat
Quam sub rege pio.

Pray go to your Latin Dictionary to interpret this passage ; you will find that *regina*, if it would agree with the measure, would suit much better with the sense.

What can I say, dear madam, to the *arrangement* which you are pleased to communicate to me? Can I think of it without satisfaction, and without vexation? I shall be in Paris on the eleventh or twelfth of the month, perhaps a day sooner or a day later. I shall watch the opportunity ; and endeavour that you shall not pass without my paying my respects to you. The party you propose after that does me great honour, and still greater pleasure. But, in the present state of our affairs, I cannot promise that it will be possible for me to be above a day absent. And, to add to my embarrassments, there is just now arrived in France a very ancient and very intimate friend of mine, Mr. Elliot, who is wholly a stranger there, and whom I cannot entirely neglect. He is justly regarded as one of the ablest and most considerable men among us ; he was my friend long before I knew any thing of the names of Boufflers, except that of the famous and virtuous marshal of the last reign. Is it not strange, that I should think my

attention to him an incumbrance on the present occasion? I know not by what accident I did not receive your letter till yesterday. I will not begin a new sheet, lest I be tempted to give you eight pages. Adieu, adieu.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE
BOUFFLERS.

London, 19th January, 1766.

My pupil and I, dear madam, arrived safely in this place, both of us in good health, and also in good humour, after the first melancholy of my separation from you was a little dissipated.

My companion is very amiable, always polite, gay often, commonly sociable. He does not know himself when he thinks he is made for entire solitude. I exhorted him on the road to write his memoirs. He told me that he had already done it, with an intention of publishing them.

At present, says he, it may be affirmed, that nobody knows me perfectly any more than himself; but I shall describe myself in such plain colours, that henceforth every one may boast that he knows himself and Jean Jaques Rousseau. I believe that he intends seriously to draw his own picture in its true colours; but I believe at the same time that nobody knows himself less. For instance, even with regard to health, a point in which few people can be mistaken, he is very fanciful. He imagines himself very infirm. He

is one of the most robust men I have ever known. He passed ten hours in the night time above deck, during the most severe weather, when all the seamen were almost frozen to death, and he caught no harm. He says that his infirmity always increases upon a journey, yet was it almost imperceptible on the road from Paris to London.

His wearing the Armenian dress is a pure whim, which, however, he is resolved never to abandon. He has an excellent warm heart; and, in conversation, kindles often to a degree of heat which looks like inspiration. I love him much, and hope that I have some share in his affections.

I find that we shall have many ways of settling him to his satisfaction, and as he is learning the English very fast, he will afterwards be able to choose for himself. There is a gentleman of the name of Townsend, a man of four or five thousand a year, who lives very privately, within fifteen miles of London, and is a great admirer of our philosopher, as is also his wife. He has desired him to live with him, and offers to take any board he pleases. M. Rousseau was much pleased with this proposal; and is inclined to accept of it. The only difficulty is, that he insists positively on his *gouvernante's* sitting at table, a proposal which is not to be made to Mr. and Mrs. Townsend.

This woman forms the chief incumbrance to his settlement. M. de Luze, our companion, says that she passes for wicked, and quarrelsome, and tattling, and is thought to be the chief cause of his quitting Neufchatel. He himself

owns her to be so dull, that she never knows in what year of the Lord she is, nor in what month or week ; and that she can never learn the different value of the pieces of money in any country. Yet she governs him as absolutely as a nurse does a child. In her absence his dog has acquired that ascendant. His affection for that creature is beyond all expression or conception.

I have as yet scarce seen any body except Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury. Both of them told me they would visit Jean Jaques if I thought their company would not be disagreeable. I encouraged them to show him that mark of distinction. Here I must also tell you of a good action which I did ; not but that it is better to conceal our good actions. But I consider not my seeking your approbation as an effect of vanity ; your suffrage is to me something like the satisfaction of my own conscience. While we were at Calais, I asked him whether, in case the king of England thought proper to gratify him with a pension, he would accept of it. I told him that the case was widely different from that of the king of Prussia, and I endeavoured to point out the difference ; particularly in this circumstance, that a gratuity from the king of England could never in the least endanger his independence. He replied : “ But would it not be using ill the king of Prussia, to whom I have since been much obliged ? However, on this head (added he), in case the offer be made me, I shall consult my father ;” meaning Lord Mareschal. I told this story to General Conway, who seemed to embrace with zeal the notion of giving him a

pension, as honourable both to the king and nation. I shall suggest the same idea to men in power whom I may meet with, and I do not despair of succeeding.

Permit me to finish, by mentioning, in one word, my warm and indissoluble attachment to you, an attachment founded both on esteem and affection, not to mention gratitude. I speak not of my acknowledgments to the prince of Conti, because I should never finish were I to enter on that subject.

Please to remember me to Madame de Vierville and Madame de Barbantine : tell the latter that Rousseau says, no French author could have wrote in a more elegant style than the letter which he received from me at Strasburgh.

I write this the day after my arrival, so that I can give you no account of any of your friends, except Lady Hervey, who is well, and remembers you very kindly.

Please to direct to me, to the care of James Coutts, Esq. banker, in the Strand.

P. S. Since I wrote the above, I have received your obliging letter, directed to Calais. M. Rousseau says, the letter of the king of Prussia is a forgery ; and he suspects it to come from M. de Voltaire.

The project of Mr. Townsend, to my great mortification, has totally vanished, on account of Mademoiselle La Vasseur. Send all his letters under my cover.

DAVID HUME TO THE MARCHIONESS DE
BARBANTANE.

Lisle Street, Leicester Fields, 16 Feb. 1766.

You have sometimes, dear madam, been embarrassed between opposite opinions, with regard to the personal character of M. Rousseau: his enemies have sometimes made you doubt of his sincerity; and you have been pleased to ask my opinion on this head. After having lived so long with him, and seen him in a variety of lights, I am now better enabled to judge; and I declare to you, that I have never known a man more amiable and more virtuous than he appears to me: he is mild, gentle, modest, affectionate, disinterested; and, above all, endowed with a sensibility of heart in a supreme degree. Were I to seek for his faults, I should say, that they consisted in a little hasty impatience, which, as I am told, inclines him sometimes to say disobliging things to people that trouble him: he is also too delicate in the commerce of life: he is apt to entertain groundless suspicions of his best friends; and his lively imagination, working upon them, feigns chimeras, and pushes him to great extremes. I have seen no instances of this disposition; but I cannot otherwise account for the violent animosities which have arisen between him and several men of merit, with whom he was once intimately connected; and some who love him much have told me, that it is difficult to live much with him, and preserve his friendship; but for my part, I think I could pass all my life in

his company, without any danger of our quarrelling.

There is one circumstance that renders him very amiable, and may serve to abate the envy arising from his superior parts ; which is, that he is endowed with a singular simplicity of manners, and is, indeed, a perfect child in the ordinary occurrences of life. This quality, joined to his great sensibility of heart, makes him to be easily governed by those who live with him. Shall I give you an instance ? He showed me the letter which he had received from the Corsicans, in which he is invited to come among them, to frame them a body of laws, and to be the Solon or Lycurgus of this new commonwealth. He told me, that he had once intended to comply with this invitation, but, on consulting Mademoiselle le Vasseur, he found she did not approve of the journey, upon which he laid aside all thoughts of it. His dog also has great influence with him, of which I shall give you an instance that may amuse you. Soon after our arrival, I prevailed on him to go to the playhouse, and see Garrick. Mrs. Garrick gave him her box, which is much concealed from the audience, but opposite to that of the king and queen ; and their majesties were privately informed, that they might there expect to see M. Rousseau. When the hour came he told me that he had changed his resolution, and would not go : for what shall I do with Sultan ? That is the name of his dog. You must leave him behind, said I. But the first person, replied he, who opens the door, Sultan will run into the streets in search of me, and will be lost. You

must then, said I, lock him up in your room, and put the key in your pocket. This was accordingly done: but as he went down stairs, the dog howled and made a noise; his master turned back, and said he had not resolution to leave him in that condition; but I caught him in my arms and told him, that Mrs. Garrick had dismissed another company in order to make room for him, —that the king and queen were expecting to see him, and without a better reason than Sultan's impatience, it would be ridiculous to disappoint them. Partly by these reasons and partly by force, I engaged him to proceed. The king and queen looked more at him than at the players.

When I have proposed to him schemes for enriching him, he has told me, that he dreads the inconvenience of changing his manner of life; particularly, said he, I should be tempted, if I were richer, to take another servant, which, I know, is taking another master; and I should in that case have my will in nothing.

The public here has taken a great interest in M. Rousseau, and though we are now in the hottest time of our hottest factions, he is not forgot. Every circumstance, the most minute, that concerns him is put in the newspapers. Unfortunately, one day he lost his dog: this incident was in the papers next morning. Soon after, I recovered Sultan very surprisingly: this intelligence was communicated to the public immediately, as a piece of good news. Hundreds of persons have offered me their assistance to settle him; you would think that all the purses and all the houses of England were open to him. Did

he understand the language, he would live very happily in this country. He is particularly pleased that nobody makes him speeches or compliments.

What has chiefly begot a doubt of his sincerity are his great singularities, which some people take for affectation, and an art to gain celebrity : but his greatest singularity is the love of solitude, which, in a man so well calculated for the entertainment of company, and seemingly so sociable, appears very extraordinary. I can however answer for his sincerity in this particular. He would not stay in London above a fortnight. I settled him in a village about six miles from it : he is impatient to remove from thence, though the place and the house are both very agreeable to him ; and, of a great variety of schemes which I propose to him, the most solitary, the most remote, the most savage place is always that which he prefers. In a few weeks he will certainly remove to Wales, and will board with a substantial farmer, who inhabits a lonely house amid forests and rivulets, and rocks and mountains. I have endeavoured to throw a hundred obstacles in the way, but nothing can divert him ; his obstinacy is here an invincible proof of his sincerity. I must, however, confess, that I think he has an inclination to complain of his health, more than I imagine he has reason for : he is not insincere, but fanciful, in that particular. I know not how your inquiries with regard to M. Rougemont have turned out.

Please tell Madame de Boufflers that I received her letter the day after I wrote mine. Assure her

that Horace Walpole's letter was not founded on any pleasantry of mine; the only pleasantry in that letter came from his own mouth, in my company, at Lord Ossory's table, which my lord remembers very well. Tell her also that I like Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, upon acquaintance. She appears to me a good creature, more clever than she has been represented. She is only somewhat of a gossip, or what you call *une commère*.

Thus, dear madam, I have wrote you a long letter concerning a third person; and have left myself neither room nor leisure to say any thing either of you or of myself. I must therefore be more concise on that head. What can I say, but that I esteem and love you, and regret my being absent from you? I am more a stranger in this place than in Paris, and the manners are by no means agreeable to me. There is a hardness in most characters, of which I now become more sensible than before. You have spoiled me for this country; and are obliged in conscience to be good to me when I shall return to you, which I hope will be soon. Remember me to Madame De Vierville and Madame De Maury, and to M. De Puiségur, as well as to M. De Barban-tane. Embrace Madame De Boufflers in my name. I have only wrote to you and her since my arrival in London; which is a great crime I have been guilty of.

I have the honour to be, with great sincerity,
your most obedient humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO M. SUARD.

Edinburgh, 19th November, 1766.

I CANNOT sufficiently express, my dear sir, all the acknowledgments which I owe you for the pains you have taken in translating a work, which so little merited your attention, or the attention of the public. It is done entirely to my satisfaction, and the introduction in particular is wrote with great prudence and discretion in every point, except where your partiality to me appears too strongly. I accept of it, however, very willingly as a pledge of your affection. You and M. D'Alembert did well in softening some expressions, especially in the notes; and I shall take care to follow these corrections in the English edition. My paper, indeed, was not wrote for the public eye; and nothing but a train of unforeseen accidents could have engaged me to give it to the press. I am not surprised, that those who do not consider nor weigh those circumstances, should blame this appeal to the public; but it is certain that if I had persevered in keeping silence, I should have passed for the guilty person, and those very people who blame me at present, would, with the appearance of reason, have thrown a much greater blame upon me.

This whole adventure I must regard as a misfortune in my life; and yet even after all is past, when it is easy to correct any errors, I am not sensible that I can accuse myself of any imprudence,—except of accepting of this man when he

threw himself into my arms: and yet it would then have appeared cruel to refuse him. I am excusable for not expecting to meet with such a prodigy of pride and ferocity, because such a one never before existed. But after he had declared war against me in so violent a manner, it could not have been prudent in me to keep silence towards my friends, and to wait till he should find a proper time to stab my reputation. From my friends, the affair passed to the public, who interested themselves more in a private story than it was possible to imagine, and rendered it quite necessary to lay the whole before them. Yet, after all, if any one be pleased to think, that by greater prudence I could have avoided this disagreeable extremity, I am very willing to submit: it is not surely the first imprudence I have been guilty of.

I agree with you, that Rousseau will probably reply, and yet it is very difficult to imagine what he can possibly say, after having already entered into so long and minute and tedious a detail. It will be ridiculous in him to bring out any new facts of consequence, which he may pretend to have omitted; after he has already mentioned the looks of my landladies and my own, as grounds of complaint. But whatever he may say, I am resolute to keep an absolute silence for the rest of my life; and allow every one to entertain what opinion they please with regard to this story. I fancy the only dispute in the world will be whether Rousseau is more wicked or mad, or whether he be not both in nearly equal propor-

tions. You say that he has enthusiasts, who still pretend to excuse him. Do they pretend then that D'Alembert, Horace Walpole, and I entered into a conspiracy against him to lead him into England, and ruin him by settling him in a most commodious and agreeable manner, and by doubling his income? For if this be not asserted, how can his outrageous behaviour towards me admit of any apology.

Could I look on Rousseau as one of the classics of your language, I should imagine that this story, silly as it is, might go to posterity, and interest them as much as it has done our contemporaries: but really his writings are so full of extravagance, that I cannot believe that their eloquence alone will be able to support them. He has a suspicion himself that this is the case: I shall tell you the story, because I think it to his credit; for otherwise I would not repeat any thing that passed between us during the time of our familiarity. When we were on the road, he told me that he was resolved to improve himself in English; and as he heard that there were two English translations of his *Emile*, he would procure them, he said, and read them and compare them: his knowledge of the subject would facilitate his advances in the language. Immediately on my arrival I procured the books for him. He kept them two or three days and then returned them, by telling me they could be of no use to him. He had not patience, he said, to read them; he was in the same case with regard to the original, and all his other writings, which,

after their publication, he could never take into his hand without disgust. It is strange, I replied, that pieces so much admired for their eloquence could give no satisfaction to their author. Why, said he, with regard to their style and eloquence I am not altogether dissatisfied with them; but I dread always *qu'ils pèchent par le fond*; and that their lustre is only the blaze of a day.

I am sensible of your great partiality and friendship, in offering to become my translator for any work, which I may hereafter give to the public: surely I could not desire to be introduced to foreign countries in a more advantageous manner than I should be by your elegant pen. But my *écritoire* is at present exhausted, and I have no prospect of filling it: I am even unsettled as to my views of establishing myself; and I indulge myself in the humour of living from day to day, partly in reading, partly in company, partly in indolence. I am afraid that you indulge yourself too much in this last enjoyment: otherwise, why do you, who have taste and knowledge in so eminent a degree, desire to translate the work of any other person, and not rather give some original performance to the public? You say, perhaps, that the constraint under which you labour in France discourages you: and you envy the liberty of England. But be assured, that the indifference, and I may say, barbarism of England, is more discouraging than all the persecutions of France, which sometimes tend only to give a lustre to an author, and to render him more interesting.

I beg my compliments to all my friends of your

society; they may be assured that I shall never give up the thoughts of revisiting them, but with my life.

I am with the greatest sincerity, my dear sir,
your most obedient and most humble servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE
BOUFFLERS.

London, 23d December, 1768.

I AM somewhat ashamed, dear madam, but still more sorry, to be obliged to address you by letter, instead of enjoying your conversation, as I flattered myself all last autumn. My intended journey was every day delayed, for different reasons, which appeared, each of them, at the time, solid and invincible; but it would be difficult for me to explain the amount of the whole. The truth is, I have, and ever had a prodigious reluctance to change my place of abode; and though this disposition was more than counterbalanced by my strong desire of enjoying your society, it made me perhaps yield more easily to the obstacles which opposed my journey. For this reason I shall say nothing of my future intentions, lest I expose myself to the same reproach of irresolution, in case I do not fulfil them. But I own I have, during a long time, felt the strongest inclination of hearing from you; and knowing your situation with regard to health and domestic satisfaction. The count, I hear, was to be mar-

ried some weeks ago : I am told, that all your friends are extremely pleased with the alliance ; and that the young couple were to come home and live with you,—a project likely to turn out much to their advantage, and your satisfaction. I flatter myself that this arrangement will tend very much to give you more liberty in the disposal of your time—the circumstance which seemed to me chiefly wanting to your enjoyment of life : some constraint must still remain ; but I hope that, besides being alleviated by your friendship for the object, it will now also admit of intervals and relaxation. It will be difficult for you ever to be so happy as I wish you ; and I am more difficult to please than you yourself would be with regard to every circumstance of your situation.

I think it my duty to inform you concerning all your friends in this country. The Bedford family seem to be comforted, entirely, from the shock they received on poor Lord Tavistock's death : some even reproached the duke with being too easily comforted ; but it proceeded from the ardency of his temper, which always takes itself to the present object without reserve. He begins to apprehend that he is losing his eyes again, and that he has endured a very cruel operation to no purpose.

Lord and Lady Holderness live elegantly and sociably, as usual : my lord is only not quite contented in being left out of the present plan of administration, and not to have any occupation. Lady Emily is their great consolation, and is a fine girl,—but will not prove so handsome as we expected.

I believe the Duchess of Grafton was your ac-

quaintance: her adventure cannot be unknown to you. It is not doubted, but, as soon as she is divorced, she will marry Lord Ossory; and the duke, his kept mistress, who was very lately a lady of the town. These are strange scenes, and very contrary to your manners.

Lord Beauchamp is married to a young lady of family and fortune, who has an entire complaisance for Lady Hertford: so that this incident, which she always dreaded, will nowise interrupt their correspondence. Lord Beauchamp makes a very good figure in parliament; but the young people cannot endure him, on account of his want of sociableness: you remember there was the same complaint against him at Paris; and it is a pity, considering his amiable manner in other respects.

There was a report here, which got into the newspapers, that I was going over to France in my former station: but it never had the least foundation. The truth is, I would rather pay you a visit voluntarily than in any public character; though indeed the prospect of affairs here is so strange and melancholy, as would make any one desirous of withdrawing from the country at any rate. Licentiousness, or rather the frenzy of liberty, has taken possession of us, and is throwing every thing into confusion. How happy do I esteem it, that in all my writings I have always kept at a proper distance from that tempting extreme, and have maintained a due regard to magistracy and established government, suitably to the character of an historian and a philosopher.—I find on that account my authority growing daily; and indeed have no reason to complain of

the public, though your partiality to me made you think so formerly. Add to this, that the king's bounty puts me in a very opulent situation. I must, however, expect that, if any great public convulsion happen, my appointments will cease, and reduce me to my own revenue: but this will be sufficient for a man of letters, who surely needs less money both for his entertainment and credit than other people.

A-propos to such people, we hear that our friend Rousseau made an elopement from the Prince of Conti, and fled into Dauphiny. He tired there, and offered to return to Mr. Davenport, but is now retired to Dombes, where he will not long remain. He is surely the most singular and most incomprehensible, and at the same time the most unhappy man that ever was born. I have seen the copy of a paper, which he wrote in Dauphiny, containing the sentiments of all mankind with regard to him. It is certainly genuine. Some marks of genius, with a great many of vanity, prove it to be no counterfeit. Did he elope from the Prince of Conti, without making a quarrel with you or his benefactor? It seems he is determined not to return to you.

I beg you to lay me at the Prince of Conti's feet, and to express my inviolable regard and attachment to his highness. May I also beg you to remember me to M. De Vierville, and M. De Barbantane. I hope Miss Beckett is well, and has the same passion, but more moderate, for you. Adieu, dear madam, believe me to be yours with the greatest sincerity.

DAVID HUME TO THE ABBÉ MORELLET.

London, 10 July, 1769.

I CONGRATULATE you, dear Abbé, upon your being so far advanced in your labours. You have now a prospect of the conclusion: I expect great entertainment and instruction from your work; and your prospectus is an excellent specimen of it. —I wish only you had taken care to supply M. Frances with a number of receipts for subscribers. I belong to a very numerous club in London, among whom I could have found many subscribers, if I had receipts to give them, and M. Frances promised to procure them for me; but has not yet been able to make good his engagement. I hope the profit of your subscription is for yourself; and that you, as well as the public, will reap benefit by this undertaking. M. Suard would tell you what noble encouragement is given to literature in England, without the intervention of the great, by means of the booksellers alone, that is, by the public. Dr. Robertson received 4000*l.* for his Charles V., the greatest price that was ever known to be given for any book. It has been published about four months, and has met with universal approbation. It is owned there never was a more elegant spirited narration; and the first volume contains very curious matter, unknown to the generality of readers. But the sale to the booksellers has not quite answered expectation, in which they seem to have been too sanguine. For as the subject consists of a period, which neither interests much

the present age nor this nation, the book, though perfectly well writ, and long expected by the public, does not run off so fast as they fondly imagined. There are only about two thousand nine hundred sold, which yet is a great number. The translation is probably published by this time at Paris, and I hope with good success.

That part of your prospectus, in which you endeavour to prove that there enters nothing of human convention in the establishment of money, is certainly very curious, and very elaborately composed: and yet I cannot forbear thinking, that the common opinion has some foundation. It is true, money must always be made of some materials, which have intrinsic value, otherwise it would be multiplied without end, and would sink to nothing. But when I take a shilling, I consider it not as a useful metal, but as something which another will take from me: and the person who shall convert it into metal is probably several millions of removes distant. You know that all states have made it criminal to melt their coin; and though this is a law which cannot well be executed, it is not to be supposed, that, if it could, it would entirely destroy the value of money, according to your hypothesis. You have a base coin, called *billon*, in France, composed of silver and copper, which has a ready currency, though the separation of the two metals, and the reduction of them to their primitive state, would, I am told, be both expensive and troublesome. Our shillings and sixpences, which are almost our only silver coin, are so much worn by use, that they are twenty, thirty, or forty per

cent. below their original value ; yet they pass currently, which can arise only from a tacit convention. Our colonies in America, for want of specie, used to coin a paper currency,—which were not bank notes, because there was no place appointed to give money in exchange : yet this paper currency passed in all payments by convention, and might have gone on, had it not been abused by the several Assemblies, who issued paper without end, and thereby discredited the currency.

You mention several kinds of money, sheep, oxen, fish, employed as measures of exchange, or as money in different parts of the world. You have overlooked that, in our colony, in Pennsylvania, the land itself, which is the chief commodity, is coined, and passes in circulation. The manner of conducting this affair is as follows :—A planter, immediately after he purchases any land, can go to a public office and receive notes to the amount of half the value of his land, which notes he employs in all payments, and they circulate through the whole colony by convention. To prevent the public from being overwhelmed by this fictitious money, there are two means employed ;—first, the notes issued to any one planter must not exceed a certain sum, whatever may be the value of his land : secondly, every planter is obliged to pay back into the public office every year one-tenth part of his notes : the whole, of course, is annihilated in ten years ; after which, it is again allowed him to take out new notes to half the value of his land. An account of this curious operation would enrich your dictionary ;

and you may have a more particular detail of it, if you please, from Dr. Franklin, who will be in Paris about this time, and will be glad to see you. I conveyed to him your prospectus, and he expressed to me a great esteem of it.

I see that in your prospectus, you take care not to disoblige your economists by any declaration of your sentiments; in which I commend your prudence. But I hope that in your work you will thunder them, and crush them, and pound them, and reduce them to dust and ashes. They are, indeed, the set of men the most arrogant that now exist, since the annihilation of the Sorbonne. I ask your pardon for saying so, as I know that you belong to that venerable body. I wonder what could engage our friend, M. Turgot, to herd among them,—I mean, among the economists, though I believe he was also a Sorbonist.

I sent your prospectus to Dr. Tucker, but have not heard from him since. I shall myself deliver copies to Dr. Robertson and M. Smith, as I go to Scotland this autumn.

And now, my dear Abbé, what remains to me but to wish you success in your judicious labours; to embrace you, and through you to embrace all our common friends—D'Alembert, Helvetius, Buffon, Baron D'Holbach, Suard, Mille, L'Es-pinasse? Poor Abbé le Bon is dead, I hear. The Abbé Galliani goes to Naples: he does well to leave Paris before I come thither, for I should certainly put him to death for the ill he has spoken of England. But it has happened as he foretold by his friend Caraccioli, who said that

the Abbé would remain two months in this country, would speak all himself, would not allow an Englishman to utter a syllable, and, after returning, would give the character of the nation during the rest of his life, as if he were perfectly well acquainted with them.

Pray make my compliments to M. Maletete : tell him that Prince Masserane says, that he has saved much effusion of blood to this country. It is certain that M. Maletete had a great curiosity to see a riot here, and yet was resolved to keep his person in safety. For this purpose he hired a window, and proposed to be present at one of the mad elections of Wilkes, and to divert himself with the fray. Somebody got a hint of it, and put it into the newspapers ; asking the freeholders if they were so degenerate as to make themselves a laughingstock, even to the French, their enemies whom they despised. Prince Masserane alleges that this incident made that election so remarkably peaceable.

Are you acquainted with Crebillon ? I am ashamed to mention his name. He sent me over his last work, with a very obliging letter : but as I must write to him in French, I have never answered him. If all the English were as impertinent as I am, the Abbé Galliani would have reason to abuse us.—I am, dear Abbé, after asking your blessing, yours sincerely,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE
BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 25 January, 1772.

I AM truly ashamed, my dear madam, of your having prevented me in breaking our long silence; but you have prevented me only by a few days: for I was resolved to have writ to you on this commencement of the year, and to have renewed my professions of unfeigned and unalterable attachment to you. While I was at London, I had continual opportunities of hearing the news of Paris, and particularly concerning you; and even since I had settled here, I never saw any body who came from your part of the world that I did not question concerning you. The last person to whom I had the satisfaction of speaking of you, was Mr. Dutens. But there were many circumstances of your situation which moved my anxiety, and of which none but yourself could give me information. You have been so good as to enter into a detail of them, much to my satisfaction; and I heartily rejoice with you, both on the restoration of your tranquillity of mind, which time and reflection have happily effected, and on the domestic satisfaction which the friendship and society of your daughter-in-law afford you. These last consolations go near to the heart, and will make you ample compensation for your disappointments in those views of ambition which you so naturally entertained, but which the late revo-

lutions in France might perhaps have rendered more full of inquietude than satisfaction.

For my part, I have totally and finally retired from the world, with a resolution never more to appear on the scene in any shape. This purpose arose, not from discontent, but from satiety. I have no object but to

Sit down and think, and die in peace—

What other project can a man of my age entertain! Happily I found my taste for reading return, even with greater avidity, after a pretty long interruption: but I guard myself carefully from the temptation of ever writing any more; and though I have had encouragement to continue my history, I am resolved never again to expose myself to the censure of such factions and passionate readers as this country abounds with. There are some people here conversible enough, —their society, together with my books, fills up my time sufficiently, so as not to leave any vacancy; and I have lately added the amusement of building, which has given me some occupation.

I hearken attentively to the hopes you give me of seeing you once more before I die. I think it becomes me to meet you at London; and though I have frequently declared that I should never more see that place, such an incident, as your arrival there, would be sufficient to break all my resolutions. I only desire to hear of your journey as soon as it is fixed, and as long before it is executed as possible, that I may previously ad-

just matters so as to share the compliment with others of my friends, particularly the Hertford family, who may reasonably expect this attention from me.

Can I beg of you to mention my name to the Prince of Conti, and assure him that the world does not contain any person more devoted to him, or more sensible of the obligations which he imposed on me? I suppose Madame De Barbantane is very agreeably situated with her pupil, the Duchess of Barbantane. Will she be pleased to accept of the respects of an old friend and servant? I beg to be remembered to Madame De Vierville. If Miss Becket be still with you, I wish to make her my compliments. I am with the greatest truth and sincerity ever yours,

DAVID HUME.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD, AT LAUSANNE.

Boromean Islands, May 16th, 1764.

DEAR HOLROYD,

HURRY of running about, time taken up with seeing places, &c. &c. &c. are excellent excuses; but I fancy you will guess that my laziness and aversion to writing to my best friend are the real motives, and I am afraid you will have guessed right.

We are at this minute in a most magnificent palace, in the middle of a vast lake; ranging about suites of rooms without a soul to interrupt us, and secluded from the rest of the universe.

VOL VI.

G,

We shall sit down in a moment to supper, attended by all the count's household. This is the fine side of the medal,—turn to the reverse. We are got here wet to the skin; we have crawled about fine gardens, which rain and fogs prevented our seeing! and if to-morrow does not hold up a little better, we shall be in some doubt whether we can say we have seen these famous islands. Guise says yes, and I say no. The count is not here: we have our supper from a paltry hedge alehouse (excuse the bull); and the servants have offered us beds in the palace, pursuant to their master's directions.

I hardly think you will like Turin; the court is old and dull; and in that country every one follows the example of the court. The principal amusement seems to be, driving about in your coach in the evening, and bowing to the people you meet. If you go while the royal family is there, you have the additional pleasure of stopping to salute them every time they pass. I had that advantage fifteen times one afternoon. We were presented to a lady who keeps a public assembly, and a very mournful one it is; the few women that go to it are each taken up by their cicisbeo; and a poor Englishman, who can neither talk Piedmontese nor play at Faro, stands by himself without one of their haughty nobility doing him the honour of speaking to him. You must not attribute this account to our not having staid long enough to form connexions. It is a general complaint of our countrymen, except of Lord ****, who has been engaged for about two years in the service of a lady, whose long nose is

her most distinguishing fine feature. The most sociable women I have met with are the king's daughters. I chatted for about a quarter of an hour with them, talked about Lausanne, and grew so very free and easy, that I drew my snuff-box, rapped it, took snuff twice (a crime never known before in the presence-chamber), and continued my discourse in my usual attitude of my body bent forwards, and my forefinger stretched out. As it might however have been difficult to keep up this acquaintance, I chiefly employed my time in seeing places, which fully repaid me in pleasure the trouble of my journey. What entertained me the most, was the museum and the citadel. The first is under the care of a M. Bartoli, who received us, without any introduction, in the politest manner in the world, and was of the greatest service to us, as I dare say he will be to you. The citadel is a stupendous work; and when you have seen the subterraneous part of it, you will scarcely think it possible such a place can ever be taken. As it is however a regular one, it does not pique my curiosity so much as those irregular fortifications hewn out of the Alps, as Exilles, Fenestrelles, and the Brunette would have done, could we have spared the time necessary. Our next stage was Milan, where we were mere spectators, as it was not worth while to endeavour at forming connexions for so very few days. I think you will be surprised at the great church, but infinitely more so at the regiment of Baden, which is in the citadel. Such steadiness, such alertness in the men, and such exactness in the officers as exceeded all my expecta-

tions. Next Friday I shall see the regiment reviewed by General Serbelloni. Perhaps I may write a particular letter about it. From Milan we proceed to Genoa, and thence to Florence. You stare:—but really we find it so inconvenient to travel like mutes, and to lose a number of curious things for want of being able to assist our eyes with our tongues, that we have resumed our original plan, and leave Venice for next year. I think I should advise you to do the same.

Milan, May 18th, 1764.

The next morning was not fair, but however we were able to take a view of the islands, which, by the help of some imagination, we conclude to be a very delightful, though not an enchanted place. I would certainly advise you to go there from Milan, which you may well perform in a day and a half. Upon our return, we found Lord Tilney and some other English in their way to Venice. We heard a melancholy piece of news from them: Byng died at Bologna a few days ago of a fever. I am sure you will be all very sorry to hear it.

We expect a volume of news from you in relation to Lausanne, and in particular to the alliance of the Duchess with the Frog. Is it already concluded? How does the bride look after her great revolution? Pray embrace her and the adorable, if you can, in both our names; and assure them, as well as all the *Spring**, that we talk of them very often, but particularly of a Sunday; and that

* A society of young ladies.

we are so disconsolate, that we have neither of us commenced cicisbeos as yet, whatever we may do at Florence. We have drunk the duchess's health, not forgetting the little woman, on the top of Mount Cenis, in the middle of the Logo Maggiore, &c. &c. I expect some account of the said little woman. Who is my successor? I think Montagony began to supplant me before I went. I expect your answer at Florence, and your person at Rome; which the Lord grant. Amen.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD, AT BERLIN.

DEAR HOLROYD,

Beriton, Oct. 31, 1765.

Why did I not leave a letter for you at Marseilles? For a very plain reason: because I did not go to Marseilles. But, as you have most judiciously added, why did not I send one? Humph! I own that nonpluses me a little. However, hearken to my history. After revolving a variety of plans, and suiting them as well as possible to time and finances, Guise and I at last agreed to pass from Venice to Lyons, swim down the Rhone, wheel round the south of France, and embark at Bourdeaux. Alas! At Lyons I received letters which convinced me that I ought no longer to deprive my country of one of her greatest ornaments. Unwillingly I obeyed, left Guise to execute alone the remainder of our plan, passed about ten delicious days at Paris, and arrived in England about the end of June. Guise followed me about two months

afterwards, as I was informed by an epistle from him, which, to his great astonishment, I immediately answered. You will perceive there is still some virtue among men. *Exempli gratiâ*, your letter is dated Vienna, October 12th, 1765 ; it made its appearance at Beriton, Wednesday evening, October 29th. I am at this present writing, sitting in my library, on Thursday morning, between the hours of twelve and one. I have ventured to suppose you still at Berlin ; if not, I presume you take care that your letters should follow you. This ideal march to Berlin is the only one I can make at present. I am under command : and were I to talk of a third sally as yet, I know some certain people who would think it just as ridiculous as the third sally of the renowned Don Quixotte. All I ever hoped for was, to be able to take the field once more, after lying quiet a couple of years. I must own that your executing your tour in so complete a manner gives me a little selfish spleen. If I make a summer's escape to Berlin, I cannot hope for the companion I flattered myself with. I am sorry, however, I have said so much ; but as it is difficult to increase your honour's proper notions of your own perfections, I will e'en let it stand. Indeed, I owed you something for your account of the favourable reception my book has met with. I see there are people of taste at Vienna, and no longer wonder at your liking it. Since the court is so agreeable, a thorough reformation must have taken place. The stiffness of the Austrian etiquette, and the haughty magnificence of the Hungarian princes, must have given way

to more civilized notions. You have (no doubt) informed yourself of the forces and revenues of the empress. I think (however unfashionably) we always esteemed her. Have you lost or improved that opinion? Princes, like pictures, to be admired, must be seen in their proper point of view, which is often a pretty distant one. I am afraid you will find it peculiarly so at Berlin.

I need not desire you to pay a most minute attention to the Austrian and Prussian discipline. You have been bit by a mad serjeant as well as myself; and when we meet, we shall run over every particular which we can approve, blame, or imitate. Since my arrival, I have assumed the august character of major, received returns, issued orders, &c. &c. &c. I do not intend you shall have the honour of reviewing my troops next summer. Three fourths of the men will be recruits; and during my pilgrimage, discipline seems to have been relaxed. But I summon you to fulfil another engagement. Make me a visit next summer. You will find here a bad house, a pleasant country, in summer, some books, and very little strange company. Such a plan of life for two or three months must, I should imagine, suit a man who has been for as many years struck from one end of Europe to the other, like a tennis ball. At least I judge of you by myself. I always loved a quiet, studious, indolent life; but never enjoyed the charms of it so truly as since my return from an agreeable but fatiguing course of motion and hurry. However I shall hear of your arrival, which can scarcely be so soon as January, 1766, and shall probably have the misfortune of meeting you in town soon after.

We may then settle our plans for the ensuing campaign.

En attendant (admire me, this is the only scrap of foreign lingo I have imported into this epistle—if you had seen that of Guise to me!) let me tell you a piece of Lausanne news. Nannette Grand is married to Lieutenant Colonel Prevost. Grand wrote to me; and by the next post I congratulated both father and daughter. The Curchod (Madam Necker) I saw at Paris. She was very fond of me, and the husband particularly civil. Could they insult me more cruelly? Ask me every evening to supper; go to bed, and leave me alone with his wife—what an impertinent security! it is making an old lover of mighty little consequence. She is as handsome as ever, and much genteeler; seems pleased with her fortune rather than proud of it. I was (perhaps indiscreetly enough) exalting Nannette d'Illens's good luck and the fortune. "What fortune?" (said she, with an air of contempt)—not above twenty thousand livres a year." I smiled, and she caught herself immediately.—"What airs I give myself in despising twenty thousand livres a year, who a year ago looked upon eight hundred as the summit of my wishes!"

I must end this tedious scrawl. Let me hear from you. I think I deserve it. Believe me, my dear Holroyd, I share in all your pleasures, and feel all your misfortunes. Poor Bolton! I saw it in the newspaper. Is Ridley with you? I suspect not: but if he is, assure him I do not forget him, though he does me. Adieu; and believe me, most affectionately yours,

E. GIBBON, JUNIOR.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Boodle's, 10 o'clock, Monday night, Feb. 3d, 1772.

I LOVE, honour, and respect, every member of Sheffield Place; even my great enemy Datch*, to whom you will please to convey my sincere wishes, that no *simpleton* may wait on him at dinner, that his wise papa may not show him any pictures, and that his much wiser mamma may chain him hand and foot, in direct contradiction to Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights.

It is difficult to write news, because there is none. Parliament is perfectly quiet; and I think that Barré, who is just now playing at whist in the room, will not have exercise of the lungs, except, perhaps, on a message much talked of, and soon expected, to recommend it to the wisdom of the house of commons to provide a proper future remedy against the improper marriages of the younger branches of the royal family. The noise of Lutterel is subsided, but there was some foundation for it. The colonel's expenses in his bold enterprise were yet unpaid by government. The hero threatened, assumed the patriot, received a sop, and again sunk into the courtier. As to Denmark, it seems now that the king, who was totally unfit for government, has only passed from the hands of his queen wife to those of his queen mother-in-law. The former is said to have indulged a very *vague* taste in her amours. She would not be admitted into the Pantheon, whence the *gentlemen proprietors* exclude all beauty, unless

* The name by which Mr. Holroyd's son called himself.

unspotted and immaculate (tautology, by the by). The *gentlemen proprietors*, on the other hand, are friends and patrons of the leopard beauties. Advertising challenges have passed between the two great factions, and a bloody battle is expected Wednesday night. *Apropos*, the Pantheon in point of ennui and magnificence, is the wonder of the eighteenth century and of the British empire. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Boodle's, Saturday night, Feb. 8th, 1772.

THOUGH it is very late, and the bell tells me that I have not above ten minutes left, I employ them with pleasure in congratulating you on the late victory of our dear mamma, the Church of England. She had last Thursday seventy-one rebellious sons who pretended to set aside her will on account of insanity: but two hundred and seventeen worthy champions, headed by Lord North, Burke, Hans Stanley, Charles Fox, Godfrey Clarke, &c., though they allowed the thirty-nine clauses of her testament were absurd and unreasonable, supported the validity of it with infinite humour. By the by, Charles Fox prepared himself for that holy war, by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotion cost him only about 500*l.* per hour—in all 11,000*l.* Galy lost 5000*l.* This is from the best authority. I hear too, but will not warrant it, that W. H. by way of paying his court to L. C. has lost this winter 12,000*l.* How I long to be ruined!

There are two county contests, Sir Thomas Egerton and Colonel Townley, in Lancashire, after the county had for some time gone a begging. In Salop, Sir Watkin, supported by Lord Gower, happened by a punctilio to disoblige Lord Craven, who told us last night that he had not quite 9000*l.* a year in that county, and who has set up Pigot against him. You may suppose we all wish for Got Almighty* against the black devil.

I am sorry your journey is deferred. Compliments to Datch. As he is now in durance, great minds forgive their enemies, and I hope he may be released by this time.—Coming, sir. Adieu.

You see the princess of W. is gone. Hans Stanley says it is believed the empress queen has taken the same journey.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Boodle's, ten o'clock, Thursday evening, Dec. 1772.

DEAR HOLROYD,

My schemes with regard to you have been entirely disappointed. The business that called me to town was not ready before the twentieth of last month, and the same business has kept me here till now. I have, however, a very strong inclination to eat a Christmas mince pie with you; and let me tell you that inclination is no small compliment. What are the trees and waters

* Alluding to the Welsh opinion that Sir Watkin was in Wales nearly as great a personage.

of Sheffield Place, compared with the comfortable smoke, lazy dinners, and inflammatory Junius's, which we can every day enjoy in town? You have seen the last Junius. He calls on the distant legions to march to the capital, and free us from the tyranny of the Prætorian guards. I cannot answer for the ghost of the *hic et ubique*, but the Hampshire militia are determined to keep the peace, for fear of a broken head. After all, do I mean to make you a visit next week? Upon my soul, I cannot tell. I tell every body that I shall: I know that I cannot pass the week with any man in the world with whom the pleasure of seeing each other will be more sincere or more reciprocal. Yet, *entre nous*, I do not believe I shall be able to get out of this town before you come into it. At all events, I look forwards, with great impatience, to Bruton Street* and the Romans†. Believe me most truly yours.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Bentinck Street, Dec. 16th, 1773.

To the vulgar eye of an idle man, London is empty; but I find many pleasant companions, both dead and alive. Two or three days ago I dined at Atwood's with a very select party. Lord G. Germaine was of it, and we communed a long time. You know Lord Holland is paying Charles's debts. They amount to 140,000*l*. At a meeting

* Where Mr. Holroyd's family passed a winter.

† The Roman Club.

of his creditors, his agent declared, that after deducting 6000*l.* a year settled on Ste*, and a decent provision for his old age, the residue of his wealth amounted to no more than 90,000*l.* The creditors stared, till Mr. Powell declared that he owed every thing to the noble lord; that *he happened* to have 50,000*l.* in long annuities, and begged that he might be permitted to supply the deficiency. How generous! Yet there are people who say the money only stood in his name. My brother Ste's son is a second Messiah, said Charles the other day. How so? Because born for the destruction of the Jews.

MR. GIBBON TO MRS. GIBBON.

DEAR MADAM,

London, August, 1775.

WILL you accept my present literary business as an excuse for my not writing? I think you will be in the wrong if you do; since I was just as idle before. At all events, however, it is better to say three words, than to be totally a dumb dog. *Apropos* of dog, but not of dumb: your Pomeranian is the comfort of my life; pretty, impertinent, fantastical, all that a young lady of fashion ought to be. I flatter myself that our passion is reciprocal. I am just at present engaged in a great historical work; no less than a History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; with the first volume of which I may possibly oppress the public next winter. It

* Lord H.'s eldest son.

would require some pages to give a more particular idea of it ; but I shall only say in general, that the subject is curious, and never yet treated as it deserves ; and that during some years it has been in my thoughts, and even under my pen. Should the attempt fail, it must be by the fault of the execution. Adieu, dear madam, believe me most truly yours.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Bentinck Street, Jan. 18th, 1777.

As I presume my lady does not make a practice of tumbling down stairs every day after dinner, by this time the colours must have faded, and the high places (I mean the temples) are reduced to a proper level. But what, in the name of the great prince, is the meaning of her declining the Urban expedition ? Is it the spontaneous result of her own proud spirit ? or does it proceed from the secret machinations of her domestic tyrant ? At all events, I expect you will both remember your engagement of next Saturday in Bentinck Street, with Donna Catherina, the Mountaineer (*Hon. General Simon Fraser*), &c. Things go on very prosperously in America. Howe is himself in the Jerseys, and will push at least as far as the Delaware river. The continental (perhaps *now* the rebel) army is in a great measure dispersed, and Washington, who wishes to cover Philadelphia, has not more than six or seven thousand men with him. Clinton designs to con-

quer Rhode Island in his way home. But what I think of much greater consequence, a province made its submission, and desired to be reinstated in the peace of the king. It is indeed only poor little Georgia; and the application was made to Governor Tonyn, of Florida. Some disgust at a violent step of the Congress, who removed the President of their Provincial Assembly, a leading and popular man, cooperated with the fear of the Indians, who began to amuse themselves with the exercise of scalping on their back settlements. Town fills, and we are mighty agreeable. Last year, on the queen's birth-day, Sir G. Warren had his diamond star cut off his coat; this day the same accident happened to him again, with another star worth seven hundred pounds. He had better compound by the year. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Paris, June 16th, 1777.

I TOLD you what would infallibly happen, and you know enough of the nature of the beast not to be surprised at it. I have now been at Paris exactly five weeks; during which time I have not written to any person whatsoever within the British dominions, except two lines of notification to Mrs. Gibbon. The demon of procrastination has at length yielded to the genius of friendship, assisted indeed by the powers of fear and shame. But when I have seated myself before a table, and begin to revolve all that I have seen and

tasted during this busy period, I feel myself oppressed and confounded; and I am very near throwing away the pen, and resigning myself to indolent despair. A complete history would require a volume, at least, as corpulent as the *Decline and Fall*; and if I attempt to select and abridge, besides the difficulty of the choice, there occur so many things which cannot properly be entrusted to paper, and so many others of too slight a texture to support the journey, that I am almost tempted to reserve for our future conversations the detail of my pleasures and occupations. But as I am sensible that you are *rigid* and impatient, I will try to convey, in a few words, a general idea of my situation as a man of the world, and as a man of letters. You remember that the Neckers were my principal dependance; and the reception which I have met with from them very far surpassed my most sanguine expectations. I do not indeed lodge in their house (as it might excite the jealousy of the husband, and procure me a *lettre de cachet*), but I live very much with them, and dine and sup whenever they have company, which is almost every day, and whenever I like it, for they are not in the least *exigeans*. Mr. Walpole gave me an introduction to Madame du Deffand, an agreeable young lady of eighty-two years of age, who has constant suppers, and the best company in Paris. When you see the duke of Richmond, he will give you an account of that house, where I meet him almost every evening. Ask him about Madame de Cambis. I have met the duke of Choiseul, at his particular request, dined by

accident with Franklin, conversed with the emperor, been presented at court, and gradually, or rather rapidly, I find my acquaintance spreading over the most valuable parts of Paris. They pretend to like me, and whatever you may think of French professions, I am convinced that some at least are sincere. On the other hand, I feel myself easy and happy in their company, and only regret that I did not come over two or three months sooner. Though Paris throughout the summer promises me a very agreeable society, yet I am hurt every day by the departure of men and women whom I begin to know with some familiarity, the departure of officers for their governments and garrisons, of bishops for their diocesses, and even of country gentlemen for their estates, as a rural taste gains ground in this country. So much for the general idea of my acquaintance; details would be endless, yet unsatisfactory. You may add to the pleasures of society those of the spectacles and promenades, and you will find that I lead a very agreeable life; let me just condescend to observe, that it is not extravagant. After decking myself out with silks and silver, the ordinary establishment of coach, lodging, servants, eating, and pocket expenses does not exceed sixty pounds per month. Yet I have two footmen in handsome liveries behind my coach, and my apartment is hung with damask. Adieu for the present: I have more to say, but were I to attempt any further progress, you must wait another post; and you have already waited long enough, of all conscience.

Let me just, in two words, give you an idea of my day. I am now going (nine o'clock) to the king's library, where I shall stay till twelve ; as soon as I am dressed, I set out to dine with the duke de Nivernois : shall go from thence to the French comedy, into the princess de Beauveau's *loge grillée*, and cannot quite determine whether I shall sup at Madame du Deffand's, Madame Necker's, or the Sardinian ambassador's. Once more adieu.

I embrace my lady and *Cambini*. I shall with cheerfulness execute any of her commissions.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

February 23d, 1778.

You do not readily believe in preternatural miscarriages of letters ; nor I neither. Listen, however, to a plain and honest narrative. This morning after breakfast, as I was ruminating on your silence, Thomas, my new footman, with confusion in his looks and stammering on his tongue, produced a letter reasonably soiled, which he was to have brought me the day of his arrival, and which had lain forgotten from that time in his pocket. To shorten as much as possible the continuance, I immediately inquired, whether any method of conveyance could be devised more expeditious than the post, and was fortunately informed of your coachman's intentions. You probably know the heads of the plan ; an act of parliament to declare, that we never *had* any

intention of taxing America : another act, to empower the crown to name commissioners, authorised to suspend hostilities by sea and land, as well as all obnoxious acts ; and, in short, to grant every thing, except independence. Opposition, after expressing their doubts whether the lance of Achilles could cure the wound which it had inflicted, could not refuse their assent to the principles of conduct which they themselves had always recommended. Yet you must acknowledge, that in a business of this magnitude there may arise several important questions, which, without a spirit of faction, will deserve to be debated : whether parliament ought not to name the commissioners ? whether it would not be better to repeal the obnoxious acts ourselves ? I do not find that the world, that is, a few people whom I happen to converse with, are much inclined to praise Lord North's ductility of temper. In the service of next Friday you will, however, take notice of the injunction given by the Liturgy : " And all the people shall say after the *Minister*, Turn us again, O Lord; and so shall we be turned." While we consider whether we shall negotiate, I fear the French have been more diligent. It is positively asserted, both in private and in parliament, and not contradicted by the ministers, that on the fifth of this month a treaty of commerce (which naturally leads to a war) was signed at Paris with the independent States of America. Yet there still remains a hope that England may obtain the preference. The two greatest countries in Europe are fairly running a race for the favour of America. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO MR. HOLROYD.

Almack's, Wednesday evening, 1778.

I DELAYED writing, not so much through indolence, as because I expected every post to hear from you. The state of Beriton is uncertain, incomprehensible, tremendous. It would be endless to send you the folios of Hugonin (*Mrs. G.'s solicitor*), but I have enclosed you one of his most picturesque epistles, on which you may meditate. Few offers; one, promising enough, came from a gentleman at Camberwell. I detected him, with masterly skill and diligence, to be only an attorney's clerk, without money, credit, or experience. I have written as yet in vain to Sir John Shelly, about Hearsay; perhaps you might get intelligence. I much fear that the Beriton expedition is necessary; but it has occurred to me, that if I *met*, instead of *accompanying* you, it would save me a journey of above one hundred miles. That reflection led to another of a very impudent nature; viz. that if I did not accompany you, I certainly could be of no use to you or myself on the spot: that I had much rather, while you examined the premises, pass the time in a horse-pond; and that I had still rather pass it in my library with the *Decline and Fall*. But that would be an effort of friendship worthy of Theæus or Pirithous: modern times would hardly credit, much less imitate, such exalted virtue. No news from America; yet there are people, large ones too, who talk of conquering it next summer with the help of twenty thousand Russi-

ans. I fancy you are better satisfied with private than public war. The Lisbon packet in coming home met above forty of our privateers. Adieu. I hardly know whether I direct right to you, but I think Sheffield Place the surest.

DR. ROBERTSON TO MR. GIBBON.

College of Edinburgh, May 12th, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I AM ashamed of having deferred so long to thank you for the agreeable presents of your two new volumes; but just as I had finished the first reading of them, I was taken ill, and continued, for two or three weeks, nervous, deaf, and languid. I have now recovered as much spirit as to tell you with what perfect satisfaction I have not only perused, but studied, this part of your work. I knew enough of your talents and industry to expect a great deal, but you have gone far beyond my expectations. I can recollect no historical work from which I ever received so much instruction; and, when I consider in what a barren field you had to glean and pick up materials, I am truly astonished at the connected and interesting story you have formed. I like the style of these volumes better than that of the first; there is the same beauty, richness, and perspicuity of language, with less of that quaintness, into which your admiration of Tacitus sometimes seduced you. I am highly pleased with the reign of Julian. I was a little afraid that you might lean with some partiality towards

him ; but even bigots, I should think, must allow that you have delineated his most singular character with a more masterly hand than ever touched it before. You set me a reading his works, with which I was very slenderly acquainted ; and I am struck with the felicity wherewith you have described that odd infusion of heathen fanaticism and philosophical coxcombry, which mingled with the great qualities of a hero, and a genius. Your chapter concerning the pastoral nations is admirable ; and, though I hold myself to be a tolerably good general historian, a great part of it was new to me. As soon as I have leisure, I purpose to trace you to your sources of information ; and I have no doubt of finding you as exact there, as I have found you in other passages where I have made a scrutiny. It was always my idea that an historian should feel himself a witness giving evidence upon oath. I am glad to perceive by your minute scrupulosity, that your notions are the same. The last chapter in your work is the only one with which I am not entirely satisfied. I imagine you rather anticipate, in describing the jurisprudence and institutions of the Franks ; and should think that the account of private war, ordeals, chivalry, &c. would have come in more in its place about the age of Charlemagne, or later : but with respect to this, and some other petty criticisms, I will have an opportunity of talking fully to you soon, as I propose setting out for London on Monday. I have, indeed, many things to say to you ; and, as my stay in London is to be very short, I shall hope to find your door (at which I

will be very often) always open to me. I cannot conclude without approving of the caution with which the new volumes are written; I hope it will exempt you from the illiberal abuse the first volume drew upon you. I ever am, yours, faithfully and affectionately,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD, AT THE
CAMP, COXHEATH.

September 29th, 1782.

I SHOULD like to hear sometimes whether you survive the scenes of action and danger in which a dragoon is continually involved. What a difference between the life of a dragoon and that of a philosopher! and I will freely own that I (the philosopher) am much better satisfied with my own independent and tranquil situation, in which I have always something to do, without ever being obliged to do any thing. The Hampton Court villa has answered my expectations, and proved no small addition to my comforts; so that I am resolved next summer to hire, borrow, or steal, either the same, or something of the same kind. Every morning I walk a mile or more before breakfast, read and write *quantum sufficit*, mount my chaise and visit in the neighbourhood, accept some invitations, and escape others, use the Lucans as my daily bread, dine pleasantly at home, or sociably abroad, reserve for study an hour or two in the evening, lie in town regularly

once a week, &c. &c. &c. I have announced to Mrs. Gibbon my new arrangements ; the certainty that October will be fine, and my increasing doubts whether I shall be able to reach Bath before Christmas. Do you intend (but how can you intend any thing?) to pass the winter under canvas? Perhaps under the veil of Hampton Court I may lurk ten days or a fortnight at Sheffield, if the enraged lady does not shut the doors against me. The warden (*Lord North*) passed through on his way to Dover. He is not so fat, and more cheerful than ever. I had not any private conversation with him ; but he clearly holds the balance, unless he lets it drop out of his hand. The Pandemonium (as I understand) does not meet till the twenty-sixth of November. Town is more a desert than I ever knew it. I arrived yesterday ; dined at Sir Joshua's with a tolerable party ; the chaise is now at the door ; I dine at Richmond, lie at Hampton, &c. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

January 17th, 1783.

As I arrived about seven o'clock on Wednesday last, we were some time in town in mutual ignorance. Unlucky enough ; yet our loss will be speedily repaired. Your reason for not writing is worthy of an Irish baron : you thought Sarah might be at Bath, because you directed letters to her at Clifton, near Bristol ; where indeed I saw her in a delightful situation, swept by the winter

winds, and scorched by the summer sun. A nobler reason for your silence would be the care of the public papers, to record your steps, words, and actions. I was pleased with your Coventry oration: a panegyric on * * * is a subject entirely new, and which no orator before yourself would have dared to undertake. You have acted with prudence and dignity in casting away the military yoke. This next summer you will sit down (if you can sit) in the long lost character of a country gentleman.

For my own part, my late journey has only confirmed me in the opinion that number seven in Bentinck Street is the best house in the world. I find that peace and war alternately, and daily, take their turns of conversation, and this (Friday) is the pacific day. Next week we shall probably hear some questions on that head very strongly asked, and very foolishly answered, &c. Give me a line by return of post, and probably I may visit Downing Street on Monday evening: late, however, as I am engaged to dinner and cards. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, January 24th, 1784.

WITHIN two or three days after your last *gracious* epistle, your complaints were silenced, and your inquiries were satisfied, by an ample dispatch of four pages, which overflowed the inside of the cover, and in which I exposed my opinions of things in general, public as well as private, as

they existed in my mind, in my state of ignorance and error, about the eighteenth or twentieth of last month. Within a week after that date I epistolised, in the same rich and copious strain, the two venerable females of Newmarket and Bath, whose murmurings must now be changed into songs of gratitude and applause. My correspondence with the holy matron of Northamptonshire has been less lively and loquacious. You have not forgotten the author's vindication of himself from the foul calumnies of pretended Christians. Within a fortnight after his arrival at Lausanne, he communicated the joyful event to Mrs. Esther Gibbon. She answered, per return of post, both letters at the same time, and in very dutiful language, almost excusing her advice, which was intended for my spiritual as well as temporal good, and assuring me that *nobody should be able to injure me with her*. Unless the saint is a hypocrite, such an expression must convey a favourable and important meaning. At all events it is worth giving *ourselves* some trouble about her, without indulging any sanguine expectations of inheritance. So much for my females; with regard to my male correspondents, you are the only one to whom I have given any signs of my existence, though I have formed many a generous resolution. Yet I am not insensible of the kind and friendly manner in which Lord Loughborough has distinguished me. He could have no inducement of interest, and now that I view the distant picture with impartial eyes, I am convinced that (for a statesman) he was sincere in his wishes to serve me. When you see him, the

Paynes, Eden, Crauford, &c. tell them that I am well, happy, and ashamed. On your side, the zeal and diligence of your pen has surprised and delighted me, and your letters, at this interesting moment, are exactly such as I wished them to be—authentic anecdotes, and rational speculations, worthy of a man who acts a part in the great theatre, and who fills a seat, not only in the general Pandemonium, but in the private council of the princes of the infernal regions. With regard to the detail of parliamentary operations, I must repeat my request to you, or rather to my lady, who will now be on the spot, that she will write, not with her pen, but with her scissors, and that after every debate which deserves to pass the sea and the mountains, she will dissect the faithful narrative of Woodfall, and send it off by the next post, as an agreeable supplement to the meagre accounts of our weekly papers. The wonderful revolutions of last month have sounded to my ear more like the shifting scenes of a comedy, or comic opera, than like the sober events of real and modern history; and the irregularity of our winter posts, which sometimes retarded and sometimes hastened the arrival of the dispatches, has increased the confusion of our ideas. Surely the Lord has blinded the eyes of Pharaoh and his servants; the obstinacy of last spring was nothing compared to the headstrong and headlong madness of this winter. I expect with much impatience the first days of your meeting; the purity and integrity of the coalition will suffer a fiery trial; but if they are true to themselves and to each other, a majority

of the house of commons must prevail ; the rebellion of the young gentlemen will be crushed, and the masters will resume the government of the school. After the address and answer, I have no conception that parliament can be dissolved during the session ; but if the present ministry can outlive the storm, I think the death warrant will infallibly be signed in the summer. *Here* I blush for my country, without confessing her shame. Fox acted like a man of honour, yet surely his union with Pitt affords the only hope of salvation. How miserably are we wasting the season of peace !

I have written three pages before I come to my own business and feelings. * * * * *

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, May 11th, 1784.

ALAS ! alas ! alas ! We may now exchange our mutual condolence. Last Christmas, on the change of administration, I was struck with the thunderbolt of the unexpected event, and in the approaching dissolution I foresaw the loss of * * * * *. The long continuance and various changes of the tempest rendered me by degrees callous and insensible ; when the art of the mariners was exhausted I felt that we were sinking, I expected the ship to founder, and when the fatal moment arrived, I was even pleased to be delivered from hope and fear, to the calmness of despair. I now turn my eyes, not on the past,

but on the present and the future; what is lost I try to consider as if it never had existed; and every day I congratulate my own good fortune, let me say my prudence and resolution, in migrating from your noisy stage to a scene of repose and content. But even in this separate state, I was still anxious for my friend upon English earth, and at first was much delighted with your hint, that you were setting off for Coventry, without any prospect of an opposition. Every post, Wednesdays and Saturdays, I eagerly looked for the intelligence of your victory; and in spite of my misbehaviour, which I do not deny, I must abuse *my lady*, rather than you, for leaving me in so painful a situation. Each day raised and increased my apprehension; the *Courier de l'Europe* first announced the contest, the English papers proclaimed your defeat, and your last letter, which I received four days ago, showed me that you exerted first the spirit, and at last the temper of a hero. I am not much surprised that you should have been swept away in the general unpopularity, since even in this quiet place, your friends are considered as a factious crew, acting in direct opposition both to the king and people. For myself; I am at a loss what to say. If this repulse should teach you to renounce all connection with kings and ministers, and patriots, and parties, and parliaments; for all of which you are by many degrees too honest; I should exclaim, with Teague of respectable memory, "By my should, dear joy, you have gained a loss." Private life, whether contemplative or active, has surely more solid and

independent charms; you have *some* domestic comforts; Sheffield Place is still susceptible of useful and ornamental improvements (alas! how much better might even the last pounds have been laid out!) and if these cares are not sufficient to occupy your leisure, I can trust your restless and enterprising spirit to find new methods to preserve you from the insipidity of repose. But I much fear your discontent and regret at being excluded from that Pandemonium which we have so often cursed, as long as you were obliged to attend to it. The leaders of the party will flatter you with the opinion of their friendship and your own importance; the warmth of your temper makes you credulous and unsuspecting; and, like the rest of our species, male and female, you are not absolutely deaf to the voice of praise. Some other place will be suggested, easy, honourable, certain, where nothing is wanted but a man of character and spirit to head a superior interest; the opposition, if any, is contemptible, and the expense cannot be large. You will go down, find every circumstance falsely stated, repent that you had engaged yourself, but you cannot desert those friends who are firmly attached to your cause; besides, the money you have already spent would have been thrown away; another thousand will complete the business: deeper and deeper will you plunge, and the last evil will be worse than the first. You see I am a free-spoken counsellor; may I not be a true prophet? Did I consult my own wishes, I should observe to you, that as you are no longer a slave, you might soon be transported, as you

seem to desire, to one of the Alpine hills. The purity and calmness of the air is the best calculated to allay the heat of a political fever; the education of the two princesses might be successfully conducted under your eye and that of my lady; and if you had resolution to determine on a residence, not a visit, at Lausanne, your worldly affairs might repose themselves after their late fatigues. But you know that *I* am a friend to toleration, and am always disposed to make the largest allowance for the different natures of animals; a lion and a lamb, an eagle and a worm. I am afraid we are too quiet for you; here it would not be easy for you to create any business; you have for some time neglected books, and I doubt whether you would not think our suppers and assemblies somewhat trifling and insipid. You are far more difficult than I am; you are in search of information, and you are not content with your company, unless you can derive from them information or extraordinary amusement. For my part, I like to draw knowledge from books, and I am satisfied with polite attention and easy manners. Finally, I am happy to tell, and you will be happy to hear, that this place has in every respect exceeded my best and most sanguine hopes. How often have you said, as often as I expressed any ill humour against the hurry, the expense, and the precarious condition of my London life, "Ay, that is a nonsensical scheme of retiring to Lausanne that you have got into your head, a pretty fancy; you remember how much you liked it in your youth, but you have now seen more of the world, and if you

were to try it again, you would find yourself wofully disappointed." I had it in my head, in my heart, I have tried it, I have not been disappointed, and my knowledge of the world has served only to convince me that a capital and a crowd may contain much less real society than the small circle of this gentle retirement. The winter has been longer, but as far as I can learn, less rigorous than in the rest of Europe. The spring is now bursting upon us, and in our garden it is displayed in all its glory. I already occupy a temporary apartment, and we live in the lower part of the house; before you receive this we shall be in full possession. We have much to enjoy, and something to do, which I take to be the happiest condition of human life. Now for business, the kind of subject which I always undertake with the most reluctance, and leave with the most pleasure, * * * * *

Adieu.

And now, my Lady,
Let me approach your gentle, not grimalkin, presence, with deep remorse. You have indirectly been informed of my state of mind and body (the whole winter I have not had the slightest return of the gout, or any other complaint whatsoever); you have been apprized, and are now apprized, of my motions, or rather of my perfect and agreeable repose; yet I must confess (and I *feel*) that something of a direct and personal exchange of sentiment has been neglected on my side, though I still *persuade* myself that when I am settled in my new house

I shall have more subject, as well as leisure, to write. Such tricks of laziness your active spirit is a stranger to, though Mrs. * * * * complains that she has never had an answer to her last letters. Poor Lady Pembroke! you will feel for her! after a cruel alternative of hope and fear, her only daughter, Lady Charlotte, died at Aix en Provence; they have persuaded her to come to this place, where she is intimately connected with the Carjat family. She has taken an agreeable house, about three miles from the town, and lives retired. I have seen her; her behaviour is calm, but her affliction ——. I accept with gratitude your friendly proposal of Wedgwood's ware, and should be glad to have it bought and packed, and sent without delay through Germany; and I shall only say, that I wish to have a very complete service for two courses and a dessert, and that our suppers are numerous, frequently fifteen or twenty persons. Adieu. I do not mean this as your letter. You are very good to poor Kitty. With you I do not condole about Coventry.

MR. GIBBON TO LADY SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, October 22d, 1784.

A FEW weeks ago, as I was walking on our terrace with M. Tissot, the celebrated physician; M. Mercier, the author of the *Tableau de Paris*; the Abbé Raynal; Monsieur, Madame, and Mademoiselle Necker; the Abbé de Bourbon, a natural son of Lewis the Fifteenth; the

a baroness; Mademoiselle Necker*, one of the greatest heiresses in Europe, is now about eighteen, wild, vain, but good natured, and with a much larger provision of wit than of beauty : what increases their difficulties is their religious obstinacy of marrying her only to a Protestant. It would be an excellent opportunity for a young Englishman of a great name and a fair reputation. Prince Henry must be a man of sense ; for he took more notice, and expressed more esteem for me, than any body else. He is certainly (without touching his military character) a very lively and entertaining companion. He talked with freedom, and generally with contempt, of most of the princes of Europe ; with respect of the empress of Russia, but never mentioned the name of his brother, except once, when he hinted that it was *he himself* that won the battle of Rosbach. His nephew, and our nephew, the hereditary prince of Brunswick, is here for his education. Of the English, who live very much as a national colony, you will like to hear of Mrs. Fraser and *one* more. Donna Catherine (*Mrs. Fraser*) pleases every body, by the perfect simplicity of her state of nature. You know she has had resolution to return from England (where she told me she saw you) to Lausanne, for the sake of Miss Bristow, who is in bad health, and in a few days they set off for Nice. *The other* is the Eliza ; she passed through Lausanne, in her road from Italy to England ; poorly in health, but still adorable, (nay, do not frown !) and I enjoyed

* Afterwards the celebrated Madame de Stael.

some delightful hours by her bedside. She wrote me a line from Paris, but has not executed her promise of visiting Lausanne in the month of October. My pen has run much faster, and much farther, than I intended on the subject of others; yet, in describing them, I have thrown some light over myself and my situation. A year, a very short one, has now elapsed since my arrival at Lausanne; and after a cool review of my sentiments, I can sincerely declare, that I have never, during a single moment, repented of having executed my *absurd* project of retiring to Lausanne. It is needless to dwell on the fatigue, the hurry, the vexation which I must have felt in the narrow and dirty circle of English politics. My present life wants no foil, and shines by its own native light. The chosen part of my library is now arrived, and arranged in a room full as good as that in Bentinck Street, with this difference indeed, that instead of looking on a stone court, twelve feet square, I command, from three windows of plate glass, an unbounded prospect of many a league of vineyard, of fields, of wood, of lake, and of mountains; a scene which Lord Sheffield will tell you is superior to all you can imagine. The climate, though severe in winter, has perfectly agreed with my constitution, and the year is accomplished without any return of the gout. An excellent house, a good table, a pleasant garden, are no contemptible ingredients in human happiness. The general style of society hits my fancy; I have cultivated a large and agreeable circle of useful acquaintance, and I am much deceived if I have not laid the founda-

tions of two or three more intimate and valuable connections ; but their names would be indifferent, and it would require pages, or rather volumes, to describe their persons and characters. With regard to my standing dish, my domestic friend, I could not be much disappointed, after an intimacy of eight and twenty years. His heart and his head are excellent ; he has the warmest attachment for me, he is satisfied that I have the same for him : some slight imperfections must be mutually supported ; two bachelors, who have lived so long alone and independent, have their peculiar fancies and humours, and when the mask of form and ceremony is laid aside, every moment in a family life has not the sweetness of the honeymoon, even between the husbands and wives who have the truest and most tender regard for each other. Should you be very much surprised to hear of my being married ? Amazing as it may seem, I do assure you that the event is less improbable than it would have appeared to myself twelve months ago. Deyverdun and I have often agreed, in jest and in earnest, that a house like ours would be regulated, and graced, and enlivened, by an agreeable female companion ; but each of us seems desirous that his friend should sacrifice himself for the public good. Since my residence here I have lived much in women's company ; and, to your credit be it spoken, I like you the better the more I see of you. Not that I am in love with any particular person. I have discovered about half a dozen *wives* who would please me in different ways, and by various merits : one as a mistress (a widow, vastly like

the Eliza; if she returns, I am to bring them together); a second, a lively entertaining acquaintance; a third, a sincere good natured friend; a fourth, who would represent with grace and dignity at the head of my table and family; a fifth, an excellent economist and housekeeper; and a sixth, a very useful nurse. Could I find all these qualities united in a single person, I should dare to make my addresses, and should deserve to be refused. You hint in some of your letters, or rather postscripts, that you consider me as having renounced England, and having fixed myself for the rest of my life in Switzerland, and that you suspect the sincerity of my vague or insidious schemes of purchase or return. To remove, as far as I can, your doubts and suspicions, I will tell you, on that interesting subject, fairly and simply as much as I know of my own intentions. There is little appearance that I shall be suddenly recalled by the offer of a place or pension. I have no claim to the friendship of your young minister, and should he propose a commissioner of the customs, or secretary at Paris, the supposed objects of my low ambition, Adam in Paradise would refuse them with contempt. *Here*, therefore, I shall certainly live till I have finished the remainder of my History; an arduous work, which does not proceed so fast as I expected, amidst the avocations of society, and miscellaneous study. As soon as it is completed, most probably in three or four years, I shall infallibly return to England, about the month of May or June; and the necessary labour of printing with care two or three quarto volumes, will

detain me till their publication, in the ensuing spring. Lord Sheffield and yourself will be the loadstone that most forcibly attracts me; and as I shall be a vagabond on the face of the earth, I shall be the better qualified to domesticate myself with you, both in town and country. Here then, at no very extravagant distance, we have the certainty (if we live) of spending a year together, in the peace and freedom of a friendly intercourse; and a year is no very contemptible portion of this mortal existence. Beyond that period all is dark, but not gloomy. Whether, after the final completion of my History, I shall return to Lausanne, or settle in England, must depend on a thousand events which lie beyond the reach of human foresight, the state of public and private affairs, my own health, the health and life of Deyverdun, the various changes which may have rendered Lausanne more dear, or less agreeable, to me than at present. But without losing ourselves in this distant futurity, which perhaps they may never see, and without giving any positive answer to Maria's parting question, whether I shall be buried in England or Switzerland, let me seriously and earnestly ask you, whether you do not mean to visit me next summer? The defeat of Coventry would, I should think, facilitate the project: since the baron is no longer detained the whole winter from his domestic affairs, nor is there any attendance in the house that keeps him till Midsummer in dust and dispute. I can send you a pleasant route, through Normandy, Paris, and Lyons, a visit to the Glaciers, and your return down the Rhine,

which would be commodiously executed in three or four months, at no very extravagant expense, and would be productive of health and spirits to you, of entertainment to you both, and of instruction to *the Maria*. Without the smallest inconvenience to myself, I am able to lodge yourselves and family, by arranging you in the winter apartment, which in the summer season is not of any use to us. I think you will be satisfied with your habitation, and already see you in your dressing-room, a small pleasant room, with a delightful prospect to the west and south. If poor aunt Kitty (you oblige me beyond expression by your tender care of that excellent woman) if she were only ten years younger, I would desire you to take her with you, but I much fear we shall never meet again. You will not complain of the brevity of this epistle ; I expect, in return, a full and fair account of yourself, your thoughts and actions, soul and body, present and future, in the safe, though unreserved, confidence of friendship. The baron in two words hinted but an indifferent account of your health ; you are a fine machine ; but as he was absent in Ireland, I hope I understand the cause and the remedy. Next to yourself, I want to hear of the two baronesses. You must give me a faithful picture (and though a mother, you can give it) of their present external and internal forms ; for a year *has now elapsed*, and in *their* lives a year is an age. Adieu. Ever yours.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, October 1st, 1785.

EXTRACT from a weekly English paper, September 5th, 1785, "It is reported, but we hope without foundation, that the celebrated Mr. Gibbon, who had retired to Lausanne, in Switzerland, to finish his valuable History, lately died in that city."

The hope of the newspaper writer is very handsome and obliging to the historian; yet there are several weighty reasons which would incline one to believe that the intelligence may be true. *Primo*, It must one day be true; and therefore may very probably be so at present. *Secundo*, We may always depend on the impartiality, accuracy, and veracity of an English newspaper. *Tertio*, which is indeed the strongest argument, we are credibly informed that for a long time past the said celebrated historian has not written to any of his friends in England; and as that respectable personage had always the reputation of a most exact and regular correspondent, it may fairly be concluded from his silence, that he either is, or ought to be dead. The only objection that I can foresee, is the assurance that Mr. G—— himself read the article as he was eating his breakfast, and laughed very heartily at the mistake of his brother historian; but as he might be desirous of concealing that unpleasant event, we shall not insist on his apparent health and spirits, which might be affected by that subtle politician. He affirms, however, not only that he is alive, and

was so on the 5th of September, but that his head, his heart, his stomach are in the most perfect state, and that the climate of Lausanne has been congenial both to his mind and body. He confesses indeed, that after the last severe winter, the gout, his old enemy, from whom he hoped to have escaped, pursued him to his retreat among the mountains of Helvetia, and that the siege was long, though more languid than in his precedent attacks; after some exercise of patience he began to creep, and gradually to walk; and though he can neither run, nor fly, nor dance, he supports himself with firmness on his two legs, and would willingly kick the impertinent Gazetteer; impertinent enough, though more easily to be forgiven than the insolent *Courier du Bas Rhin*, who about three years ago amused himself and his readers with a fictitious epistle from Mr. Gibbon to Dr. Robertson.

Perhaps now you think, baron, that I shall apologize in humble style for my silence and neglect. But, on the contrary, I do assure you that I am truly provoked at your lordship's not condescending to be in a passion. I might really have been dead, I might have been sick; if I were neither dead nor sick, I deserved a volley of curses and reproaches for my infernal laziness, and you have defrauded me of my just dues. Had I been silent till Christmas, till doomsday, you would never have thought it worth your while to abuse me. Why then (let me ask in your name) did you not write before? That is indeed a very curious question of natural and

moral philosophy. Certainly I am not lazy; elaborate quartos have proved, and will abundantly prove my diligence. I can write: spare my modesty on that subject. I like to converse with my friends by pen and tongue, and as soon as I can set myself agoing, I know no moments that run off more pleasantly. I am so well convinced of that truth, and so much ashamed of forcing people that I love to forget me, that I have now resolved to set apart the first hour of each day for the discharge of my obligations; beginning *comme de raison*, with yourself, and regularly proceeding to Lord Loughborough and the rest. May Heaven give me strength and grace to accomplish this laudable intention! Amen.—Certainly (yet I do not know whether it be so certain) I should write much oftener to you if you were not linked in business, and if my business had not always been of the unpleasant and mortifying kind. Even now I shove the ugly monster to the end of this epistle, and will confine him to a page by himself, that he may not infect the purer air of our correspondence. Of my situation here I have little new to say, except a very comfortable and singular truth, that my passion for my wife or mistress (Fanny Lausanne) is not palled by satiety and possession of two years: I have seen her in all seasons, and in all humours, and though she is not without faults, they are infinitely overbalanced by her good qualities. Her face is not handsome, but her person, and every thing about her, has admirable grace and beauty: she is of a very cheerful, sociable

temper ; without much learning, she is endowed with taste and good sense ; and though not rich, the simplicity of her education makes her a very good economist ; she is forbid by her parents to wear any expensive finery ; and though her limbs are not much calculated for walking, she has not yet asked me to keep her a coach. Last spring (not to wear the metaphor to rags) I saw Lausanne in a new light during my long fit of the gout, and must boldly declare, that either in health or sickness I find it far more comfortable than your huge metropolis. In London my confinement was sad and solitary ; the many forgot my existence when they saw me no longer at Brookes's ; and the few, who sometimes cast an eye or a thought on their friend, were detained by business or pleasure, the distance of the way, or the hours of the House of Commons, and I was proud and happy if I could prevail on Elmsley to enliven the dulness of the evening. Here the objects are nearer, and much more distinct, and I myself am an object of much larger magnitude. People are not kinder, but they are more idle, and it must be confessed that, of all nations on the globe, the English are the least attentive to the old and infirm ; I do not mean in acts of charity, but in the offices of civil life. During three months I have had round my chair a succession of agreeable men and women, who came with a smile, and vanished with a nod ; and as soon as it was agreeable I had a constant party at cards, which was sometimes dismissed to their respective homes, and sometimes detained by Deyverdun to supper, without the least trouble

or inconvenience to myself. In a word, my plan has most completely answered; and I solemnly protest, after two years trial, that I have never in a single moment repented of my transmigration. The only disagreeable circumstance is the increase of a race of animals with which this country has been long infested, and who are said to come from an island in the Northern Ocean. I am told, but it seems incredible, that upwards of forty thousand English, masters and servants, are now absent on the continent; and I am sure we have our full proportion, both in town and country, from the month of June to that of October. The occupations of the closet, indifferent health, want of horses, in some measure plead my excuse; yet I do too much to please myself, and probably too little to satisfy my countrymen.—What is still more unlucky is, that a part of the colony of this present year are really good company, people one knows, &c. the Astons, Hales, Hampdens, Trevors, Lady Clarges and Miss Carter, Lord Northington, &c. I have seen Trevor several times, who talks of you, and seems to be a more exact correspondent than myself. *His wife* is much improved by her diplomatic life, and shines in every company as a woman of fashion and elegance. But those who have repaid me for the rest were Lord and Lady Spencer. I saw them almost every day, at my house or their own, during their stay of a month; for they were hastening to Italy, that they might return to London next February. He is a valuable man, and where he is familiar, a pleasant companion; she a charming woman, who, with sense and spirit, has

the simplicity and playfulness of a child. You are not ignorant of her talents, of which she has left me an agreeable specimen, a drawing of the Historic Muse, sitting in a thoughtful posture to compose. So much of Self and Co.: let us now talk a little of your house and your two countries. Does my lady ever join in the abuse which I have merited from you? Is she satisfied with her own behaviour, her unpardonable silence, to one of the prettiest, most obliging, most entertaining, most, &c. epistles that ever was penned since the epistles of *****? Will she not *new* one word of reply? I want some account of her spirits, health, amusements, of the elegant accomplishments of Maria, and the opening graces of Louisa; of yourself I wish to have some of those details which she is most likely to transmit. Are you patient in your exclusion from the house? Are you satisfied with legislating with your pen? Do you pass the whole winter in town? Have you resumed the pursuits of farming, &c.? What new connexions, public or private, have you formed? A tour to the continent would be the best medicine for the shattered nerves of a soldier and politician. By this expression you will perceive that your letter to Deyverdun is received; it landed last post, after I had already written the two first pages of this composition. On the whole, my friend was pleased and flattered; but instead of surrendering, or capitulating, he seems to be making preparations for an obstinate defence. He already talks of the right of possession*, of the duties of

* This alludes to a portrait of Mr. Gibbon, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

a good citizen, of a writ *ne exeat regnum*, and of a vote of the Two Hundred, that whoever shall, directly or indirectly, &c. is an enemy to his country. Between you be the strife, while I sit with my scales in my hand, like Jupiter on Mount Ida. I begin to view with the same indifference the combat of Achilles Pitt and Hector Fox; for such, as it should now seem, must be the comparison of the two warriors. * * * * *

At this distance I am much less angry with bills, taxes, and propositions than I am pleased with Pitt for making a friend and a deserving man happy, for releasing Batt from the shackles of the law, and for enhancing the gift of a secure and honourable competency, by the handsome manner in which it was conferred. This I understand to be the case, from the unsuspecting evidence of Lord Northington and Chief Baron Skinner; and if I can find time (*resolution*) I will send him a hearty congratulation; if I fail, you may at least communicate my intentions. Of Ireland I know nothing, and while I am writing the Decline of a great Empire, I have not leisure to attend to the affairs of a remote and petty province. I see that your friend Foster has been hooted by the mob, and unanimously chosen Speaker of the House of Commons. How could Pitt expose himself to the disgrace of withdrawing his propositions after a public attempt? Have ministers no way of computing beforehand the sense or nonsense of an Irish Parliament? I am quite in the dark; your pamphlet, or book, would probably have opened my eyes; but, whatever may have been the reason, I give you *my word of*

honour, that I have not seen nor heard of it. Here we are much more engaged with continental politics. In general, we hate the emperor, as the enemy of peace, without daring to make war. The old lion of Prussia acts a much more glorious part, as the champion of public tranquillity, and the independence of the German States.

And now for the bitter and nauseous pill of pecuniary business, upon which I shall be as concise as possible in the two articles of my discourse—land and money * * * * *

It is impossible to hate more than I do this odious necessity of owing, borrowing, anticipating, and I look forwards with impatience to the happy period when the supplies will alway be raised within the year, with a decent and useful surplus in the treasury. I now trust to the conclusion of my History, and it will hasten and secure the principal comforts of my life. You will believe I am not lazy; yet I fear the term is somewhat more distant than I thought. My long gout lost me three months in the spring; in every great work unforeseen dangers, and difficulties, and delays will arise; and I should be rather sorry than surprised if next autumn was postponed to the ensuing spring. If my lady (a good creature) should write to Mrs. Porten, she may convey news of my life and health, without saying any thing of this *possible* delay. Adieu. I embrace, &c.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, May 10th, 1786.

By the difference, I suppose, of the posts of France and Germany, Sir Stanlier's letter, though first written, is still on the road, and yours, which I received yesterday morning, brought me the first account of poor Mrs. Porten's departure. There are few events that could afflict me more deeply, and I have been ever since in a state of mind more deserving of your pity than of your reproaches. I certainly am not ignorant that we have nothing better to wish for ourselves than the fate of that best humoured woman, as you very justly style her; a good understanding and an excellent heart, with health, spirits, and a competency, to live in the midst of her friends till the age of fourscore, and then to shut her eyes without pain or remorse. Death can have deprived her only of some years of weakness, perhaps of misery; and for myself, it is surely less painful to lose her at present than to find her, on my visit to England next year, sinking under the weight of age and infirmities, and perhaps forgetful of herself and of the persons once the dearest to her. All this is perfectly true: but all these reflections will not dispel a thousand sad and tender remembrances that rush upon my mind. To her care I am indebted in earliest infancy for the preservation of my life and health. I was a puny child, neglected by my mother, starved by my nurse, and of whose being very little care or expectation was entertained; without her maternal vigilance

I should either have been in my grave, or imperfectly lived a crooked rickety monster, a burden to myself and others. To her instructions I owe the first rudiments of knowledge, the first exercise of reason, and a taste for books, which is still the pleasure and glory of my life; and though she taught me neither language nor science, she was certainly the most useful preceptor I ever had. As I grew up, an intercourse of thirty years endeared her to me, as the faithful friend and the agreeable companion. You have seen with what freedom and confidence we lived together, and have often admired her character and conversation, which could alike please the young and the old. All this is now lost, finally, irrecoverably lost! I will agree with my lady, that the immortality of the soul is at some times a very comfortable doctrine. A thousand thanks to her for her constant kind attention to that poor woman who is no more. I wish I had as much to applaud, and as little to reproach, in my own behaviour towards Mrs. Porten since I left England; and when I reflect that my letters would have soothed and comforted her decline, I feel more deeply than I can express, the real neglect and seeming indifference of my silence. To delay a letter from the Wednesday to the Saturday, and then from the Saturday to the Wednesday, appears a very slight offence; yet in the repetition of such delay, weeks, months, and years will elapse, till the omission may become irretrievable, and the consequence mischievous or fatal. After a long lethargy, I had roused myself last week, and

wrote to the three old ladies; my letter for Mrs. Porten went away last post, Saturday night, and yours did not arrive till Monday morning. Sir Stanier will probably open it, and read the true picture of my sentiments for a friend who, when I wrote, was already extinct. There is something sad and awful in the thought, yet, on the whole, I am not sorry that even this tardy epistle preceded my knowledge of her death: but it did not precede (you will observe) the information of her dangerous and declining state, which I conveyed in my last letter, and her anxious concern that she should never see or *hear* from me again. This idea, and the hard thoughts which you must entertain of me, press so much on my mind, that I must frankly acknowledge a strange inexcusable supineness, on which I desire you would make no comment, and which in some measure may account for my delays in corresponding with you. The unpleasant nature of business, and the apprehension of finding something disagreeable, tempted me to postpone from day to day, not only the answering, but even the opening, your penultimate epistle; and when I received your last, yesterday morning, the seal of the former was still unbroken. Oblige me so far as to make no reflections; my own may be of service to me hereafter. Thus far (except the last sentence) I have run on with a sort of melancholy pleasure, and find my heart much relieved by unfolding it to a friend. And the subject so strongly holds me, so much disqualifies me for other discourse; either serious or pleasant, that

here I would willingly stop, and reserve all miscellaneous matter for a second volunteer epistle. But we both know how frail are promises, how dangerous are delays, and there are some pecuniary objects on which I think it necessary to give you an immediate, though now tardy, explanation. * * * * *. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, Sept. 25, 1789.

*Alas! what perils do environ**The man who meddles with cold iron.*

ALAS! what delays and difficulties do attend the man who meddles with legal and larded business! Yet if it be only to disappoint your expectation, I am not so very nervous at this new provoking obstacle. I had totally forgotten the deed in question, which was contrived in the last year of my father's life, to tie his hands and regulate the disorder of his affairs; and which might have been so easily cancelled by Sir Stanier, who had not the smallest interest in it, either for himself or his family. The amicable suit, which is now become necessary, must, I think, be short and unambiguous, yet I cannot help dreading the crotchets that lurk under the chancellor's great wig; and at all events, I foresee some additional delay and expense. The golden pill of the two thousand eight hundred pounds has soothed my discontent; and if it be safely lodged with

the Goslings, I agree with you, in considering it as an unequivocal pledge of a fair and willing purchaser. It is indeed chiefly in that light I now rejoice in so large a deposit, which is no longer necessary in its full extent. You are apprized by my last letter that I have reduced myself to the life enjoyment of the house and garden. And, in spite of my feelings, I am every day more convinced that I have chosen the safer side. I believe my cause to have been good, but it was doubtful. Law in this country is not so expensive as in England, but it is more troublesome; I must have gone to Berne, have solicited my judges in person, a vile custom! the event was uncertain; and, during at least two years, I should have been in a state of suspense and anxiety; till the conclusion of which it would have been madness to have attempted any alteration or improvement. According to my present arrangement, I shall want no more than eleven hundred pounds of the two thousand, and I suppose you will direct Gosling to lay out the remainder in India bonds, that it may not lie quite dead, while I am accountable to * * * * for the interest. The elderly lady in a male habit, who informed me that Yorkshire is a register county, is a certain judge, on Sir William Blackstone, whose name you may possibly have heard. After stating the danger of purchasers and creditors, with regard to the title of estates on which they lay out or lend their money, he thus continues: * * * * *. If I am mistaken, it is in pretty good company; but I suspect that we are

all right, and that the register is confined to one or two ridings. As we have, alas! two or three months before us, I shall hope that your prudent sagacity will discover some sound land, in case you should not have time to arrange another mortgage. I now write in a hurry, as I am just setting out for Rolle, where I shall be settled with cook and servants in a pleasant apartment, till the middle of November. The Severys have a house there, where they pass the autumn. I am not sorry to vary the scene for a few weeks, and I wish to be absent while some alterations are making in my house at Lausanne. I wish the change of air may be of service to Severy the fatter, but we do not at all like his present state of health. How completely, alas, how completely could I now lodge you! but your firm resolve of making me a visit seems to have vanished like a dream. Next summer you will not find five hundred pounds for a rational friendly expedition; and should parliament be dissolved, you will perhaps find five thousand for ————. I cannot think of it with patience. Pray take strenuous measures for sending me a pipe of excellent Madeira in cask, with some dozens of Malmsey Madeira. It should be consigned to Messrs. Romberg, Voituriers, at Ostend, and I must have timely notice of its march. We have so much to say about France, that I suppose we shall never say any thing. That country is now in a state of dissolution. Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, May 15th, 1790.

SINCE the first origin (*ab ovo*) of our connexion and correspondence, so long an interval of silence has not intervened, as far as I remember, between us.

From my silence you conclude that the moral complaint, which I insinuated in my last, is either insignificant or fanciful. The conclusion is rash. But the complaint in question is of the nature of a slow lingering disease, which is not attended with any immediate danger. As I have not leisure to expatiate, take the idea in three words: "Since the loss of poor Deyverdun, I am *alone*; and even in Paradise, solitude is painful to a social mind. When I was a dozen years younger, I *scarcely* felt the weight of a single existence amidst the crowds of London, of parliament, of clubs; but it will pass more heavily upon me in this tranquil land, in the decline of life, and with the increase of infirmities. Some expedient, even the most desperate, must be embraced to secure the domestic society of a male or female companion. But I am not in a hurry; there is time for reflection and advice." During this winter such finer feelings have been suspended by the grosser evil of bodily pain. On the ninth of February I was seized with such a fit of the gout as I had never known, though I may be thankful that its dire effects have been confined to the feet and knees, without ascending to the more noble parts. With some vicissitudes of better and

worse, I have groaned between two and three months; the debility has survived the pain, and though now easy, I am carried about in my chair, without any power, and with a very distant chance of supporting myself, from the extreme weakness and contraction of the joints of my knees. Yet I am happy in a skilful physician, and kind assiduous friends: every evening, during more than three months, has been enlivened (excepting when I have been forced to refuse them) by some cheerful visits, and very often by a chosen party of both sexes. How different is such society from the solitary evenings which I have passed in the tumult of London! It is not worth while fighting about a shadow, but should I ever return to England, Bath, not the metropolis, would be my last retreat.

Your portrait is at last arrived in perfect condition, and now occupies a conspicuous place over the chimney-glass in my library. It is the object of general admiration: good judges (the few) applaud the work; the name of Reynolds opens the eyes of the many; and were I not afraid of making you vain, I would inform you that the original is not allowed to be more than five and thirty. In spite of private reluctance and public discontent, I have honourably dismissed *myself**. I shall arrive at Sir Joshua's before the end of the month; he will give me a look, and perhaps a touch; and you will be indebted to the president one guinea for the carriage. Do not be nervous, I am not rolled up; had I been so, you

* His portrait.

might have gazed on my charms four months ago. I want some account of yourself, of my lady (shall we never directly correspond?) of Louisa, and of Maria. How has the latter since her launch supported a quiet winter in Sussex? I so much rejoice in your divorce from that b—— Kitty Coventry, that I care not what marriage you contract. A great city would suit your dignity, and the duties, which would kill me in the first session, would supply your activity with a constant source of amusement. But tread softly and surely; the ice is deceitful, the water is deep, and you may be soured over head and ears before you are aware. Why did not you or Elmsley send me the African pamphlet* by the post? it would not have cost much. You have such a knack of turning a nation, that I am afraid you will triumph (perhaps by the force of argument) over justice and humanity. But do you not expect to work at Belzebub's sugar plantations in the infernal regions, under the tender government of a negro driver? I should suppose both my lady and Miss Frith very angry with you.

As to the bill for prints, which has been too long neglected, why will you not exercise the power, which I have never revoked, over all my cash at the Goslings? The Severy family has passed a very favourable winter; the young man is impatient to hear from a family which he places above all others: yet he will generously write next week, and send you a drawing of the

* Lord S.'s "Observations on the Project for abolishing the Slave Trade."

alterations in the house. Do not raise your ideas; you know *I* am satisfied with convenience in architecture, and some elegance in furniture. I admire the coolness with which you ask me to epistolize Reynell and Elmsley, as if a letter were so easy and pleasant a task; it appears less so to me every day.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, August 7, 1790.

I ANSWER at once your two letters; and I should probably have taken earlier notice of the first, had I not been in daily expectation of the second. I must begin on the subject of what really interests me the most—your glorious election for Bristol. Most sincerely do I congratulate your exchange of a cursed expensive jilt, who deserted you for a rich Jew, for an honourable connexion with a chaste and virtuous matron, who will probably be as constant as she is disinterested. In the whole range of election, from Caithness to St. Ives, I much doubt whether there be a single choice so truly honourable to the member and the constituents. The second commercial city invites, from a distant province, an independent gentleman, known only by his active spirit, and his writings on the subject of trade; and names him, without intrigue or expense, for her representative: even the voice of party is silenced, while factions strive which shall applaud the most.

You are now sure, for seven years to come, of never wanting food,—I mean business: what a

crowd of suitors or complainants will besiege your door! what a load of letters and memorials will be heaped on your table! I much question whether even you will not sometimes exclaim, *Ohe! jam satis est!* but that is your affair. Of the excursion to Coventry I cannot decide, but I hear it pretty generally blamed: but, however, I love gratitude to an old friend; and shall not be very angry if you damned them with a farewell to all eternity. But I cannot express my indignation at the use of those obsolete, odious words, Whig and Tory. In the American war they might have some meaning; and then your lordship was a Tory, although you supposed yourself a Whig: since the coalition, all general principles have been confounded; and if there ever was an opposition to men, not measures, it is the present. Luckily both the leaders are great men; and, whatever happens, the country must fall upon its legs. What a strange mist of peace and war seems to hang over the ocean! We can perceive nothing but secrecy and vigour, but those are excellent qualities to perceive in a minister. From yourself and politics I now return to my private concerns, which I shall methodically consider under the three great articles of mind, body, and estate.

I am not absolutely displeased at your firing so hastily at the hint, a tremendous hint, in my last letter. But the danger is not so serious or imminent as you seem to suspect; and I give you my word, that, before I take the slightest step which can bind me either in law, conscience, or honour, I will faithfully communicate, and we

will freely discuss the whole state of the business. But at present there is not any thing to communicate or discuss ; I do assure you that I have not any particular object in view : I am not in love with any of the hyænas of Lausanne, though there are some who keep their claws tolerably well pared. Sometimes, in a solitary mood, I have fancied myself married to one or another of those whose society and conversation are the most pleasing to me ; but when I have painted in my fancy all the probable consequences of such a union I have started from my dream, rejoiced in my escape, and ejaculated a thanksgiving that I was still in possession of my natural freedom. Yet I feel, and shall continue to feel, that domestic solitude, however it may be alleviated by the world, by study, and even by friendship, is a comfortless state, which will grow more painful as I descend in the vale of years. At present my situation is very probable ; and if at dinnertime, or at my return home in the evening, I sometimes sigh for a companion, there are many hours, and many occasions, in which I enjoy the superior blessing of being sole master of my own house. But your plan, though less dangerous, is still more absurd than mine : such a couple as you describe could not be found ; and, if found, would not answer my purpose ; their rank and position would be awkward and ambiguous to myself and my acquaintance ; and the agreement of three persons with three characters would be still more impracticable. My plan of Charlotte Porter is undoubtedly the more desirable ; and *she might* either remain a spinster (the case is not

without example), or marry some Swiss of my choice, who would increase and enliven our society; and both would have the strongest motive for kind and dutiful behaviour. But the mother has been indirectly sounded, and will not hear of such a proposal for some years. On my side, I would not take her, but as a piece of soft wax which I could model to the language and manners of the country: I must therefore be patient.

Young Severy's letter, which may be now in your hands, and which, for these last three or four posts, has furnished my indolence with a new pretence for delay; has already informed you of the means and circumstances of my resurrection. Tedious indeed was my confinement, since I was not able to move from my house or chair, from the ninth of February to the first of July, very nearly five months. The first weeks were accompanied with more pain than I have ever known in the gout, with anxious days and sleepless nights; and when that pain subsided, it left a weakness in my knees which seemed to have no end. My confinement was however softened by books, by the possession of every comfort and convenience, by a succession each evening of agreeable company, and by a flow of equal spirits and general good health. During the last weeks I descended to the ground-floor, poor Deyverdun's apartment, and constructed a chair like Merlin's, in which I could wheel myself in the house and on the terrace. My patience has been universally admired; yet how many thousands have passed those five months less easily than myself. I remember making a remark per-

fectly simple, and perfectly true. "At present (I said to Madame de Severy) I am not positively miserable, and I may reasonably hope a daily or weekly improvement, till sooner or later in the summer I shall recover new limbs, and new pleasures, which I do not now possess: have any of you such a prospect?" The prediction has been accomplished, and I have arrived to my present condition of strength, or rather of feebleness: I now can walk with tolerable ease in my garden and smooth places; but on the rough pavement of the town I use, and perhaps shall use, a sedan chair. The Pyrmont waters have performed wonders; and my physician (not Tissot, but a very sensible man) allows me to hope, that the term of the interval will be in proportion to that of the fit.

Have you read in the English papers, that the government of Berne is overturned, and that we are divided into three democratical *leagues*? true as what I read in the French papers, that the English have cut off Pitt's head, and abolished the House of Lords. The people of this country are happy; and in spite of some miscreants, and more foreign emissaries, they are sensible of their happiness.

Finally—Inform my lady, that I am indignant at a false and heretical assertion in her last letter to Severy, "that friends at a distance cannot love each other, if they do not write." I love her better than any woman in the world,—indeed I do; and yet I do not write. And she herself—but I am calm. We have now nearly one hun-

dred French exiles,—some of them worth being acquainted with ; particularly a Count de Schomberg, who is become almost my friend ; he is a man of the world, of letters, and of sufficient age, since in 1753, he succeeded to Marshal Saxe's regiment of dragoons. As to the rest, I entertain them, and they flatter me : but I wish we were reduced to our Lausanne society. Poor France ! the state is dissolved, the nation is mad ! Adieu.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, May 31, 1791.

At length I see a ray of sunshine breaking from a dark cloud. Your epistle of the 13th arrived this morning, the 25th instant, the day after my return from Geneva ; it has been communicated to Severy. We now believe that you intend a visit to Lausanne this summer, and we hope that you will execute that intention. If you are a man of honour, you shall find me one ; and, on the day of your arrival at Lausanne, I will notify my engagement of visiting the British isle before the end of the year 1792, excepting only the fair and foul exception of the gout. You rejoice me, by proposing the addition of dear Louisa ; it was not without a bitter pang that I threw her overboard, to lighten the vessel and secure the voyage : I was fearful of the governess, a second carriage, and a long train of difficulty and expense, which might have ended in blowing up the whole scheme.

But if you can bodkin the sweet creature into the coach, she will find an easy welcome at Lausanne. The first arrangements which I must make before your arrival may be altered by your own taste, on a survey of the premises, and you will all be commodiously and pleasantly lodged. You have heard a great deal of the beauty of my house, garden, and situation ; but such are their intrinsic value that, unless I am much deceived, they will bear the test even of exaggerated praise. From my knowledge of your lordship, I have always entertained some doubt how you would get through the society of a Lausanne winter ; but I am satisfied that, exclusive of friendship, your summer visit to the banks of the Lemane lake will long be remembered as one of the most agreeable periods of your life ; and that you will scarcely regret the amusement of a Sussex Committee of Navigation in the dogdays. You ask for details ; what details ? a map of France and a post book are easy and infallible guides. If the ladies are not afraid of the ocean, you are not ignorant of the passage from Brighton to Dieppe : Paris will then be in your direct road ; and even allowing you to look at the Pandæmonium, the ruins of Versailles, &c. a fortnight diligently employed will clear you from Sheffield Place to Gibbon Castle. What can I say more ?

As little have I to say on the subject of my worldly matters, which seem now, Jupiter be praised, to be drawing towards a final conclusion ; since when people part with their money, they are indeed serious. I do not perfectly understand

the ratio of the precise sum which you have poured into Gosling's reservoir, but suppose it will be explained in a general account.

You have been very dutiful in sending me, what I have always desired, a cut Woodfall on a remarkable debate; a debate, indeed, most remarkable! Poor Burke is the most eloquent and rational madman that I ever knew. I love Fox's feelings, but I detest the political principles of the man, and of the party. Formerly, you detested them more strongly during the American war than myself. I am half afraid that you are corrupted by your unfortunate connections.—Should you admire the National Assembly, we shall have many an altercation, for I am as high an aristocrat as Burke himself; and he has truly observed, that it is impossible to debate with temper on the subject of that cursed revolution. In my last excursion to Geneva I frequently saw the Neckers, who by this time are returned to their summer residence at Copet. He is much restored in health and spirits, especially since the publication of his last book, which has probably reached England. Both parties, who agree in abusing him, agree likewise that he is a man of virtue and genius; but I much fear that the purest intentions have been productive of the most baneful consequences. Our military men, I mean the French, are leaving us every day for the camp of the princes at Worms, and support what is called * ——— representation. Their hopes are sanguine; I will not answer for their being

* A word is here torn out by the seal.

well grounded: it is *certain*, however, that the emperor had an interview, the 19th instant, with the count of Artois at Mantua; and the aristocrats talk in mysterious language of Spain, Sardinia, the empire, four or five armies, &c. They will doubtless strike a blow this summer: may it not recoil on their own heads! Adieu. Embrace our female travellers. A short delay!

MR. GIBBON TO THE HON. MISS HOLROYD.

Lausanne, 9th Nov. 1791.

GULLIVER is made to say, in presenting his interpreter, "My tongue is in the mouth of my friend." Allow me to say, with proper expressions and excuses, "My pen is in the hand of my friend;" and the aforesaid friend begs leave thus to continue*.

I remember to have read somewhere in Rousseau, of a lover quitting very often his mistress, to have the pleasure of corresponding with her. Though not absolutely your lover, I am very much your admirer, and should be extremely tempted to follow the same example. The spirit and reason, which prevail in your conversation, appear to great advantage in your letters. The three which I have received, from Berne, Coblenz, and Brussels, have given me much real pleasure; first, as a proof that you are often thinking of me; secondly, as an evidence that

* The remainder of the letter was dictated by Mr. Gibbon, and written by M. Wilbelon de Severy.

you are capable of keeping a resolution ; and, thirdly, from their own intrinsic merit and entertainment. The style, without any allowance for haste or hurry, is perfectly correct ; the manner is neither too light, nor too grave ; the dimensions neither too long, nor too short : they are such, in a word, as I should like to receive from the daughter of my best friend. I attend your lively journal, through bad roads, and worse inns.—Your description of men and manners conveys very satisfactory information ; and I am particularly delighted with your remark concerning the irregular behaviour of the Rhine. But the Rhine, alas ! after some temporary wanderings, will be content to flow in his old channel, while man—man is the greatest fool of the whole creation.

I direct this letter to Sheffield Place, where I suppose you arrived in health and safety. I congratulate my lady on her quiet establishment by her fire-side : and hope you will be able, after all your excursions, to support the climate and manners of old England. Before this epistle reaches you, I hope to have received the two promised letters from Dover and Sheffield Place. If they should not meet with a proper return, you will pity and forgive me. I have not yet heard from Lord Sheffield, who seems to have devolved on his daughter the task which she has so gloriously executed. I shall probably not write to him, till I have received his first letter of business from England ; but with regard to my lady, I have most excellent intentions.

I never could understand how two persons of such superior merit, as Miss Holroyd and Miss

Lausanne, could have so little relish for one another, as they appeared to have in the beginning ; and it was with great pleasure that I observed the degrees of their growing intimacy, and the mutual regret of their separation. Whatever you may imagine, your friends at Lausanne have been thinking as frequently of yourself and company, as you could possibly think of them ; and you will be very ungrateful, if you do not seriously resolve to make them a second visit, under such name and title as you may judge most agreeable. None of the Severy family, except perhaps my secretary, are inclined to forget you ; and I am continually asked for some account of your health, motions, and amusements. Since your departure, no great events have occurred. I have made a short excursion to Geneva and Copet, and found Mr. Necker in much better spirits than when you saw him. They pressed me to pass some weeks this winter in their house at Geneva ; and I may possibly comply, at least, in part, with their invitation. The aspect of Lausanne is peaceful and placid ; and you have no hopes of a revolution driving me out of this country. We hear nothing of the proceedings of the commission, except by playing at cards every evening with Monsieur Fischer (*the president of it*), who often speaks of Lord Sheffield with esteem and respect. There is no appearance of Rosset and La Motte being brought to a speedy trial, and they still remain in the castle of Chillon, which (according to the geography of the National Assembly) is washed by the sea. Our winter begins with great severity ; and we shall not probably have many balls,

which, as you may imagine, I lament much.—Angletine does not consider two French words as a letter. Montrond sighs and blushes whenever Louisa's name is mentioned: Philippine wishes to converse with her on men and manners. The French ladies are settled in town for the winter, and they form, with Mrs. Trevor, a very agreeable addition to our society. It is now enlivened by a visit of the Chevalier de Boufflers, one of the most accomplished men in the *ci-devant* kingdom of France.

As Mrs. Wood (*Madame de Silva*), who has miscarried, is about to leave us, I must either cure or die; and, upon the whole, I believe the former will be most expedient. You will see her in London, with dear Corea, next winter. My rival magnificently presents me with a hog'shead of Madeira; so that in honour I could not supplant him: yet I do assure you, from my heart, that another departure is much more painful to me. The apartment below* is shut up, and I know not when I shall again visit it with pleasure. Adieu. Believe me, one and all, most affectionately yours.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, Dec. 23, 1791.

ALAS! alas! the demon of procrastination has again possessed me. Three months have nearly rolled away since your departure; and seven let-

* The apartment principally inhabited during the residence of Lord Sheffield's family at Lausanne.

ters, five from the most valuable Maria, and two from yourself, have extorted from me only a single epistle, which perhaps would never have been written, had I not used the permission of employing my own tongue and the hand of a secretary. Shall I tell you, that, for these last six weeks, the eve of every day has witnessed a *firm* resolution, and the day itself has furnished some ingenious delay? This morning, for instance, I determined to invade you as soon as the breakfast things should be removed: they were removed; but I had something to read, to write, to meditate, and there was time enough before me. Hour after hour has stolen away, and I finally begin my letter at two o'clock, evidently too late for the post, as I must dress, dine, go abroad, &c. A foundation, however, *shall be* laid, which shall stare me in the face; and next Saturday I shall probably be roused by the awful reflection that it is the last day in the year.

After realizing this summer an event which I had long considered as a dream of fancy, I know not whether I should rejoice or grieve at your visit to Lausanne. While I possessed the family, the sentiment of pleasure highly predominated; when, just as we had subsided in a regular, easy, comfortable plan of life, the last trump sounded, and, without speaking of the pang of separation, you left me to one of the most gloomy, solitary months of October which I have ever passed. For yourself and daughters, however, you have contrived to snatch some of the most interesting scenes of this world. Paris, at such a moment, Switzerland, and the Rhine, Strasburg, Coblenz,

have suggested a train of lively images and useful ideas, which will not be speedily erased.—The mind of the young damsel, more especially, will be enlarged and enlightened in every sense. In four months she has lived many years; and she will much deceive and displease me, if she does not review and methodize her journal, in such a manner as she is capable of performing, for the amusement of her particular friends.—Another benefit which will redound from your recent view is, that every place, person, and object, about Lausanne, are now become familiar and interesting to you. In our future correspondence (do I dare pronounce the word correspondence?) I can talk to you as freely of every circumstance as if it were actually before your eyes. And first, of my own improvemoents.—All those venerable piles of ancient verdure which you *admired* have been eradicated in one fatal day. Your faithful substitutes, William de Severy and Levade, have never ceased to persecute me, till I signed their death warrant. Their place is now supplied by a number of picturesque naked poles, the foster fathers of as many twigs of Platanuses, which may afford a grateful but distant shade to the founder, or to his *seris Nepotibus*. In the meanwhile I must confess that the terrace appears broader, and that I discover a much larger quantity of snow than I should otherwise do.—The workmen admire your ingenious plan for cutting out a new bedchamber and bookroom; but, on mature consideration, we all unanimously prefer the old scheme of adding a third room on the terrace beyond the library, with two spacious

windows, and a fireplace between. It will be larger (28 feet by 21) and pleasanter, and warmer; the difference of expense will be much less considerable than I imagined; the door of communication with the library will be artfully buried in the wainscot; and, unless it be opened by my own choice, may always remain a profound secret. Such is the design; but as it will not be executed before next summer, you have time and liberty to state your objections. I am much colder about the staircase, but it may be finished, according to your idea, for thirty pounds; and I feel they will persuade me. Am I not a very rich man? When these alterations are completed, few authors of six volumes in quarto will be more agreeably lodged than myself. Lausanne is now full and lively; all our native families are returned from the country; and, praised be the Lord! we are infested with few foreigners, either French or English. Even our democrats are more reasonable or more discreet; it is agreed, to wave the subject of politics, and all seem happy and cordial. I have a grand dinner this week, a supper of thirty or forty people on Twelfth-day, &c.; some concerts have taken place, some balls are talked of; and even Maria would allow (yet it is ungenerous to say even Maria) that the winter scene at Lausanne is tolerably gay and active. I say nothing of the Severys, as Angletine has epistolized Maria last post. She has probably hinted that her brother meditates a short excursion to Turin: that worthy fellow Trevor has given him a pressing in-

vation to his own house. In the beginning of February I propose going to Geneva for three or four weeks. I shall lodge and eat with the Neckers; my mornings will be my own, and I shall spend my evenings in the society of the place, where I have many acquaintances. This short absence will agitate my stagnant life, and restore me with fresh appetite to my house, my library, and my friends. Before that time (the end of February) what events may happen, or be ready to happen! The National Assembly (compared to which the former was a senate of heroes and demigods) seem resolved to attack Germany *avec quatre millions de bayonnettes libres*; the army of the princes must soon either fight, or starve, or conquer. Will Sweden draw his sword? Will Russia draw her purse? an empty purse! All is darkness and anarchy: neither party is strong enough to oppose a settlement; and I cannot see a possibility of an amicable arrangement, where there are no heads (in any sense of the word) who can answer for the multitude. Send me your ideas, and those of Lord Guildford, Lord Loughborough, Fox, &c.

Before I conclude, a word of my vexations affairs.—Shall I never sail on the smooth stream of good security and half yearly interest? Will every body refuse my money? I had already written to Darrel and Gosling to obey your commands, and was in hopes that you had already made large and salutary evacuations. During your absence I never expected much effect from the cold indifference of agents; but you are now

in England—you will be speedily in London : set all your setting dogs to beat the field, hunt, inquire, why should you not advertise? Yet I am almost ashamed to complain of some stagnation of interest, when I am witness to the natural and acquired philosophy of so many French, who are reduced from riches, not to indigence, but to absolute want and beggary. A Count Argout has just left us, who possessed ten thousand a year in the island of St. Domingo ; he is utterly burnt and ruined ; and a brother, whom he tenderly loved, has been murdered by the negroes. These are real misfortunes. I have much revolved the plan of the Memoirs I once mentioned, and, as you do not think it ridiculous, I believe I shall make an attempt : if I can please myself, I am confident of not displeasing ; but let this be a profound secret between us : people must not be prepared to laugh, they must be taken by surprise. Have you looked over your, or rather my, letters?—Surely, in the course of the year, you may find a safe and cheap occasion of sending me a parcel ; they may assist me. Adieu. I embrace my lady ; send me a favourable account of her health. I kiss the *merveille*. By an amazing push of remorse and diligence I have finished my letter (three pages and a half) this same day since dinner ; but I have not time to read it. Ever yours.

MR. GIBBON TO LORD SHEFFIELD.

Lausanne, April 4th, 1792.

FOR fear you should abuse me as usual, I will begin the attack, and scold at you, for not having yet sent me the long expected intelligence of the completion of my mortgage. *Cospetto di Baccho!* for I must ease myself by swearing a little.—What is the cause, the meaning, the pretence of this delay? Are the Yorkshire mortgagers inconstant in their wishes? Are the London lawyers constant in their procrastination? Is a letter on the road, to inform me that all is concluded, or to tell me that all is broken to pieces? Had the money been placed in the three per cents last May, besides the annual interest, it would have gained by the rise of stock nearly twenty per cent. Your lordship is a wise man, a successful writer, and a useful senator; you understand America and Ireland, corn and slaves; but your prejudice against the funds, in which I am often tempted to join, makes you a little blind to their increasing value in the hands of our virtuous and excellent minister. But our regret is vain; one pull more and we reach the shore; and our future correspondence will be no longer tainted with business. Shall I then be more diligent and regular? I hope and believe so; for now that I have got over this article of worldly interest, my letter seems to be almost finished. *A-propos* of letters, am I not a sad dog to forget my lady and

Maria? Alas! the dual number has been prejudicial to both.

How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away!

I am like the ass of famous memory; I cannot tell which way to turn first, and there I stand mute and immovable. The baronial and maternal dignity of my lady, supported by twenty-five years friendship, may claim the preference. But the five incomparable letters of Maria! Next week, however.—Am I not ashamed to talk of next week?

I have most successfully and most agreeably executed my plan of spending the month of March at Geneva, in the Necker-house, and every circumstance that I had arranged turned out beyond my expectation; the freedom of the morning, the society of the table and drawingroom, from half an hour past two till six or seven; an evening assembly or card party, in a round of the best company, and, excepting one day in the week, a private supper of free and friendly conversation. You would like Geneva better than Lausanne; there is much more information to be got among the men; but though I found some agreeable women, their manners and style of life are, upon the whole, less easy and pleasant than our own. I was much pleased with Necker's brother, M. de Germany, a good humoured, polite, sensible man, without the genius and fame of the statesman, but much more adapted for private and ordinary happiness. Madame de Staël is expected in a few weeks at Copet, where they receive her,

and where "to dumb forgetfulness a prey," she will have leisure to regret "the pleasing anxious being," which she enjoyed amidst the storms of Paris. But what can the poor creature do? her husband is in Sweden, her lover is no longer secretary at war, and her father's house is the only place where she can reside with the least degree of prudence and decency. Of that father I have really a much higher idea than I ever had before; in our domestic intimacy he cast away his gloom and reserve; I saw a great deal of his mind, and all that I saw is fair and worthy. He was overwhelmed by the hurricane, he mistook his way in the fog, but in such a perilous situation, I much doubt whether any mortal could have seen or stood. In the meanwhile he is abused by all parties, and none of the French in Geneva will set their foot in his house. He remembers Lord Sheffield with esteem; his health is good, and he would be tranquil in his private life, were not his spirits continually wounded by the arrival of every letter and every newspaper. His sympathy is deeply interested by the fatal consequences of a revolution, in which he had acted so leading a part; and he feels as a friend for the danger of M. de Lessart, who may be guilty in the eyes of the Jacobins, or even of his judges, by those very actions and dispatches which would be most approved by all the lovers of his country. What a momentous event is the emperor's death! In the forms of a new reign, and of the imperial election, the democrats have at least gained time, if they knew how to use it. But the new monarch, though of a weak com-

plexion, is of a martial temper; he loves the soldiers, and is beloved by them; and the slow fluctuating politics of his uncle may be succeeded by a direct line of march to the gates of Strasbourg and Paris. It is the opinion of the master movers in France (I know it most certainly) that their troops will not fight, that the people have lost all sense of patriotism, and that on the first discharge of an Austrian cannon the game is up. But what occasion for Austrians or Spaniards? the French are themselves their greatest enemies; four thousand Marseillois are marched against Arles and Avignon, the *troupes de ligne* are divided between the two parties, and the flame of civil war will soon extend over the southern provinces. You have heard of the unworthy treatment of the Swiss regiment of Ernest. The canton of Berne has bravely recalled them, with a stout letter to the king of France, which must have been inserted in all the papers. I now come to the most unpleasant article—our home politics. Rosset and La Motte are condemned to fine and twenty years imprisonment in the fortress of Arbourg. We have not yet received their official sentence, nor is it believed that the proofs and proceedings against them will be published; an awkward circumstance, which it does not seem easy to justify. Some (though none of note) are taken up, several are fled, many more are suspected and suspicious. All are silent, but it is the silence of fear and discontent; and the secret hatred which rankled against government begins to point against the few who are known to be well affected.—I never knew any place so much changed as

Lausanne, even since last year, and though you will not be much obliged to me for the motive, I begin very seriously to think of visiting Sheffield Place by the month of September next. Yet here again I am frightened by the dangers of a French, and the difficulties of a German route. You must send me an account of the passage from Dieppe to Brighton, with an itinerary of the Rhine, distances, expenses, &c. As usual, I just save the post, nor have I time to read my letter, which, after wasting the morning in deliberation, has been struck off in a heat since dinner. The views of Sheffield Place are just received ; they are admired, and shall be framed. Severy has spent the carnival at Turin. Trevor is only the best man in the world.

MR. GIBBON TO LADY ELIZABETH FOSTER, AT
FLORENCE.

Lausanne, November 8th, 1792.

I REMEMBER it has been observed of Augustus and Cromwell, that they should never have been born, or never have died ; and I am sometimes tempted to apply the same remark to certain beings of a softer nature ; who, after a short residence on the banks of the Lemon Lake, are now flown far away over the Alps and the Apennines, and have abandoned their votaries to the insipidity of common life. The remark, however, would be unreasonable, and the sentiment ungrateful. The pleasures of the summer, the

lighter and the graver moments of the society of *petit Ouchy**, are indeed passed, perhaps never to return; but the remembrance of that delightful period is itself a pleasure, and I enjoy, I cherish the flattering persuasion that it is remembered with some satisfaction in the gallery of Florence, as well as in *the library* of Lausanne. Long before we were reduced to seek a refuge from the savages of Gaul, I had secretly indulged the thought, or at least the wish, of asking leave to attend *mes bonnes amies* over Mount Cenis, of basking once more in an Italian sun, and of paying once more my devotions to the Apollo of the Vatican. But my aged and gouty limbs would have failed me in the bold attempt of scaling St. Bernard, and I wanted patience to undertake the circumitineration of the Tirol. Your return to the Pays de Vaud next summer I hold to be extremely doubtful; but my anxiety on that head is somewhat diminished by the sure and certain hope of our all meeting in England the ensuing winter. I flatter myself that the porter of Devonshire House will not be inexorable; yet I am afraid of losing you amidst the smoke and tumult of fashionable London, in which the night is devoted to pleasure and the morning to sleep. My ambition may perhaps aspire to pass some hours in the palladian Chiswick, or even some days at Chatsworth; but these princely mansions will not recall the freedom, the ease, the *primitive* solitude of dear little

* A villa near Lausanne, where the Duchess of Devonshire and Lady E. Foster resided.

Ouchy. Indeed ! indeed ! your fair friend was made for something better than a duchess.

Although you most magnanimously abandoned us in the crisis of our fate, yet as you seem to interest yourself in the hopes and fears of this little country, it is my duty to inform you, that we still hang in a state of suspense ; inclining, however, rather to the side of hope than of despair. The garrison, and even the bourgeoisie, of Geneva showed a vigorous resolution of defending the city ; and our frontiers have been gradually covered with fifteen thousand intrepid Swiss. But the threats of a bombardment, the weight of expense, and above all, the victorious ascendant of the French republic, have abated much of the first heroic ardour. Monsieur de Montesquieu displayed a pacific, and even yielding, temper ; and a treaty was signed, dismissing the Swiss garrison from Geneva, and removing the French troops to the distance of ten leagues. But this last condition, which is indeed objectionable, displeased the Convention, who refused to ratify the agreement. New conferences were held, new messengers have been dispatched, but unless they are determined to find or to make a subject of quarrel, it is probable that we shall purchase peace by submission. As Geneva has a very dangerous democratical party within her walls, and as the national guards are already allowed to enter the city, and to tamper with the inhabitants and the garrison, I will not insure that poor little republic from one week to another. For ourselves, the approaches of danger must be more gradual. I think we are now safe for this

winter, and I no longer run to the window to see whether the French are coming. But with so many enemies without, and so many within, the government of Berne, and the tranquillity of this happy country, will be suspended by a very slender twig; and I begin to fear that Safan will drive me out of the possession of Paradise. My only comfort will be, that I shall have been expelled by the power, and not seduced by the arts of the blackest demon in hell, the demon of democracy. Where indeed will this tremendous inundation, this conspiracy of numbers against rank and property, be finally stopped? Europe seems to be universally tainted, and wherever the French can light a match, they may blow up a mine. Our only hope is now in their devouring one another; they are furious and hungry monsters, and war is almost declared between the Convention and the city of Paris, between the moderate republicans and the absolute levellers. A majority of the Convention wishes to spare the royal victims, but they must yield to the rage of the people and the thirst of popularity, and a few hours may produce a trial, a sentence, and a guillotine. M. Necker is publishing a pamphlet in defence of the august sufferers; but his feeble and tardy efforts will rather do credit to himself than service to his clients. You kindly ask after the situation of poor Severy. Alas! it is now hopeless; all his complaints are increased; all his resources are exhausted; where nature cannot work, the effect of art is vain, and his best friends begin to wish him a quiet release. His wife, I had almost said his widow, is truly an

object of compassion. The dragoon is returned for a few days ; and if his domestic sorrows give him leave, he would almost regret the want of an occasion to deserve his feather and cockade. Your note has been communicated to Madame de Montolieu ; but as she is engaged with a dying aunt, I have not yet seen her. Madame Dagaisseau has hastily left us ; the last decrees seemed to give the *émigrés* only the option of starving abroad or hanging at home ; yet she has ventured into France, on some faint glimpse of clemency for the women and children. Madame de Bouillon does not appear to move. Madame de Stael, whom I saw last week at Rolle, is still uncertain where she shall drop her burthen ; but she must soon resolve, for the young lady or gentleman is at the door,—

Demanding life, impatient for the skies.

By this time you have joined the Ladies Spencer and Duncannon, whom I beg leave to salute with the proper shades of respect and tenderness. You may, if you please, be *belle comme un ange* ; but I do not like your comparison of the archangel. Those of Milton, with whom I am better acquainted at present than with Guido, are all masculine manly figures, with a great sword by their side, and six wings folding round them. The heathen goddesses would please me as little. Your friend is less severe than Minerva, more decent than Venus, less cold than Diana, and not quite so great a vixen as the ox-eyed Juno. To express that infallible mixture of grace, sweetness, and dignity, a new race of beings must be

invented, and I am a mere prose narrator of matter of fact. Bess is much nearer the level of a mortal, but a mortal for whom the wisest man, historic or medical, would throw away two or three worlds, if he had them in his possession. From the aforesaid Bess I have received three marks of kind remembrance, from the foot of St. Bernard, with an exquisite monument of art and friendship, from Turin, and finally from Milan, with a most valuable insertion from the duchess. At birds in the air it is difficult to take aim, and I fear or hope that I shall sustain some reproaches on your not finding this long epistle at Florence. I will mark it No. 1; and why should I despair of my future since I can say with truth, that since your departure I have not spent so agreeable a morning? To each of the dear little Caros pray deliver nine kisses for me, which shall be repaid on demand. My best compliments to Mr. Pelham, if he is with you.

MR. GIBBON TO THE HON. MISS HOLROYD.

Lausanne, Nov. 10, 1792.

In dispatching the weekly political journal to Lord Sheffield, my conscience (for I have some remains of conscience) most powerfully urges me to salute, with some lines of friendship and gratitude, the amiable secretary, who might save herself the trouble of a modest apology. I have not yet forgotten our different behaviour after the much lamented *separation* of October the 4th,

1791, your meritorious punctuality, and my unworthy silence. I have still before me that entertaining narrative, which would have interested me, not only in the progress of the *cure famiglia*, but in the motions of a Tartar camp, or the march of a caravan of Arabs; the mixture of just observation and lively imagery, the strong sense of a man, expressed with the easy elegance of a female. I still recollect with pleasure the happy comparison of the Rhine, who had heard so much of liberty on both his banks, that he wandered with mischievous licentiousness over all the adjacent meadows. The inundation, alas! has now spread much wider; and it is sadly to be feared that the Elbe, the Po, and the Danube may imitate the vile example of the Rhine: I shall be content, however, if our own Thames still preserves his fair character of—

Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

These agreeable epistles of Maria produced only some dumb intentions, and some barren remorse; nor have I deigned, except by a brief missive from my chancellor, to express how much I loved the author, and how much I was pleased with the composition. That amiable author I have known and loved from the first dawning of her life and *coquetry*, to the present maturity of her talents; and as long as I remain on this planet, I shall pursue with the same tender and even anxious concern, the future steps of her establishment and life. That establishment must be splendid; that life must be happy. She is endowed with every gift of nature and fortune; but the

advantage which she will derive from them depends almost entirely on herself. You must not, you shall not, think yourself unworthy to write to any man: there is none whom your correspondence would not amuse and satisfy. I will not undertake a task, which my taste would adopt, and my indolence would too soon relinquish; but I am really curious, from the best motives, to have a particular account of your own studies and daily occupation. What books do you read, and how do you employ your time and your pen? Except some professed scholars, I have often observed that women in general read much more than men; but, for want of a plan, a method, a fixed object, their reading is of little benefit to themselves or others. If you will inform me of the species of reading to which you have the most propensity, I shall be happy to contribute my share of advice or assistance. I lament that you have not left me some monument of your pencil. Lady Elizabeth Foster has executed a very pretty drawing, taken from the door of the greenhouse where we dined last summer, and including the poor Acacia (now recovered from the cruel shears of the gardener), the end of the terrace, the front of the pavilion, and a distant view of the country, lake, and mountains. I am almost reconciled to d'Apples house, which is nearly finished. Instead of the monsters which Lord Hercules Sheffield extirpated, the terrace is already shaded with the new acacias and plantanes; and although the uncertainty of possession restrains me from building, I myself have planted a bosquet at the bottom

of the garden, with such admirable skill that it affords shade without intercepting prospect. The society of the aforesaid Eliza, of the Duchess of Devonshire, &c. has been very interesting; but they are now flown beyond the Alps, and pass the winter at Pisa. The Legards, who have long since left this place, should be at present in Italy; but I believe Mrs. Grimstone and her daughter returned to England. The Levades are highly flattered by your remembrance. Since you still retain some attachment to this delightful country, and it is indeed delightful, why should you despair of seeing it once more? The happy peer or commoner, whose name you may assume, is still concealed in the book of fate; but, whosoever he may be, he will cheerfully obey your commands of leading you from — Castle to Lausanne, and from Lausanne to Rome and Naples. Before that event takes place, I may possibly see you in Sussex; and, whether as a visiter or a fugitive, I hope to be welcomed with a friendly embrace. The delay of this year was truly painful, but it was inevitable; and individuals must submit to those storms which have overturned the thrones of the earth. The tragic story of the Archbishop of Arles I have now somewhat a better right to require at your hands. I wish to have it in all its horrid details; and as you are now so much mingled with the French exiles, I am of opinion, that were you to keep a journal of all the authentic facts which they relate, it would be an agreeable exercise at present, and a future source of entertainment and instruction.

I should be obliged to you if you would make, or find, some excuse for my not answering a letter from your aunt, which was presented to me by Mr. Fowler. I showed him some civilities, but he is now a poor invalid, confined to his room. By her channel and yours I should be glad to have some information of the health, spirits, and situation of Mrs. Gibbon, of Bath, whose alarms (if she has any) you may dispel. She is in my debt. Adieu; most truly yours.

TOPHAM BEAUCLERK, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD, Muswell Hill, July 5th, 1773.

IT is certainly ordained by fate that I should always appear in a state of humiliation before you, nothing else could have prevented me from writing to you, and endeavouring thereby to keep up an intercourse with one for whom I shall always retain the greatest and tenderest regard; lessening in some measure the greatest of all human evils, the separation from those we love; but that insuperable idleness, which accompanies me through life, which not only prevents me from doing what I ought, but likewise from enjoying my greatest pleasure, where any thing is to be done, has hitherto prevented me from writing; but if I obtain your pardon this time, I will, for the future, mend my manners, and try, by one act at least, to be worthy of that friendship which you have honoured me with. I need not

assure you that I most ardently wish to visit you this summer in Ireland ; nothing but Lady Di.'s illness shall prevent me. I have been but once at the club since you left England ; we were entertained, as usual, by Dr. Goldsmith's absurdity. Mr. V.* can give you an account of it. Sir Joshua Reynolds intends painting your picture over again ; so you may set your heart at rest for some time ; it is true, it will last so much the longer, but then you may wait these ten years for it. Elmsly gave me a commission from you about Mr. Walpole's frames for prints, which is perfectly unintelligible : I wish you would explain it, and it shall be punctually executed. The Duke of Northumberland has promised me a pair of his new pheasants for you, but you must wait till all the crowned heads in Europe have been served first.—I have been at the review at Portsmouth. If you had seen it, you would have owned that it is a very pleasant thing to be a king. It is true, —— made a job of the claret to ——, who furnished the first tables with vinegar, under that denomination. Charles Fox said that Lord Sandwich should have been impeached : what an abominable world do we live in, that there should not be above half a dozen honest men in the world, and that one of those should live in Ireland. You will, perhaps, be shocked at the small portion of honesty that I allot to your country ; but a sixth part is as much as comes to its share ; and, for any thing I know to the contrary, the other five may be in Ireland

* Mr. Agmondesham Vesey, of Lucan, near Dublin.

too, for I am sure I do not know where else to find them. Your philanthropy engages you to think well of the greatest part of mankind ; but every year, every hour, adds to my misanthropy, and I have had a pretty considerable share of it for some years past. Leave your parliament and your nation to shift for itself, and consecrate that time to your friends, which you spend in endeavouring to promote the interest of half a million of scoundrels. Since, as Pope says,—

Life can little else supply,
Than just to look about us and to die.

Do not let us lose that moment that we have, but let us enjoy all that can be enjoyed in this world ; the pleasures of a true uninterrupted friendship.—Let us leave this island of fog and iniquity, and sail to purer regions, not yet quite corrupted by European manners. It is true, you must leave behind you Marino, and your medals, but you will likewise leave behind you the S—s and R—by's of this place. I know you will say, you can do all this without flying to the other pole, by shunning the society of such wretches ; but what avails it to me, that you are the very man I could wish, when I am separated from you by sea and land ? If you will quit Marino, and sail with me, I will fly from Almack's, though, whatever evil I may have suffered from my connexion with that place, I shall always with gratitude remember that there I first began my acquaintance with you ; and in the very sincerity of truth I can say, that I would rather

have such a friend as you, even at three hundred miles distance, than both the houses of parliament for my friends in London.—I find when I have once begun to converse with you, I cannot leave off; you have spoiled me, my lord, and must take the consequence. Why should fortune have placed our paltry concerns in two different islands? If we could keep them, they are not worth one hour's conversation at Elmsly's*. If life is good for any thing, it is only made so by the society of those whom we love. At all events, I will try to come to Ireland, and shall take no excuse from you, for not coming early in the winter to London. The club exists but by your presence; the flourishing of learned men is the glory of the state. Mr. Vesey will tell you that our club consists of the greatest men in the world, consequently you see there is a good and patriotic reason for you to return to England in the winter. Pray make my best respects to Lady Charlemont and Miss Hickman†, and tell them I wish they were at this moment sitting at the door of our alehouse in Gerrard Street‡. Believe me to be, my dear lord, with the utmost sincerity, affectionately yours,

T. BEAUCLERK.

* Elmsley the bookseller.

† Sister to Lady Charlemont.

‡ Gerrard Street. The Turk's Head Tavern in that street, where the literary club then held their meetings.

TOPHAM BEAUCLERK, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD,

Adelphi, Nov. 20, 1773.

I DELAYED writing to you, as I had flattered myself that I should have been able to have paid you a visit at Dublin before this time, but I have been prevented, not by my own negligence and indolence, but by various matters.—I am rejoiced to find by your letter that Lady C. is as you wish. I have yet remaining so much benevolence towards mankind, as to wish that there may be a son of yours, educated by you, as a specimen of what mankind ought to be. Goldsmith the other day put a paragraph into the newspapers in praise of Lord Mayor Townshend. The same night we happened to sit next to Lord Shelburne, at Drury Lane ; I mentioned the circumstance of the paragraph to him ; he said to Goldsmith that he hoped that he mentioned nothing about Malagrida in it ? “ Do you know,” answered Goldsmith, “ that I never could conceive the reason why they call you Malagrida, *for* Malagrida was a very good sort of a man.” You see plainly what he meant to say, but that happy turn of expression is peculiar to himself. Mr. Walpole says that this is a picture of Goldsmith’s whole life.—Johnson has been confined for some weeks in the Isle of Sky ; we hear that he was obliged to swim over to the main land, taking hold of a cow’s tail. Be that as it may, Lady Di. * has promised to make

* Lady Diana Beauclerk, wife to Mr. Beauclerk, and daughter to Charles, late Duke of Marlborough ; eminent for her exquisite taste and skill in painting.

a drawing of it. Our poor club is in a miserable decay ; unless you come and relieve it, it will certainly expire. Would you imagine that Sir Joshua Reynolds is extremely anxious to be a member of Almack's? You see what noble ambition will make a man attempt. That den is not yet opened, consequently I have not been there ; so, for the present, I am clear upon that score. I suppose your confounded Irish politics take up your whole attention at present. If they could but have obtained the absentee tax, the Irish parliament would have been perfect. They would have voted themselves out of parliament, and lessened their estates one half of the value. This is patriotism with a vengeance.—I have heard nothing of your peacock's eggs. The Duke of N——d tells me, that if they are put into tallow, or butter, they will never hatch. I mention this to you, as worthy of your notice. Mr. Walpole promised me to send you a drawing of his frames, but he has been so much engaged with Lord Orford's affairs, that he has probably forgot it. There is nothing now at present in the literary world. Mr. Jones*, of our club, is going to publish an account, in Latin, of the eastern poetry, with extracts translated verbatim in verse. I will order Elmsly to send it to you, when it comes out ; I fancy it will be a very pretty book. Goldsmith has written a prologue for Mrs. Yates, which she spoke this evening before the opera. It is very good. You will see it soon in all the newspapers, otherwise I would send it to you. I hope to hear in your next letter, that you have

* Sir William Jones.

fixed your time for returning to England. We cannot do without you. If you do not come here, I will bring all the club over to Ireland, to live with you, and that will drive you here in your own defence. Johnson shall spoil your books, Goldsmith pull your flowers, and Boswell talk to you : stay then, if you can. Adieu, my dear Lord. Pray make my best compliments to Lady Charlemont. Believe me to be very sincerely and affectionately yours,

T. BEAUCLERK.

TOPHAM BEAUCLERK, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD, Adelphi, December 24, 1773.

ENCLOSED I send you the drawing of Mr. Walpole's frames; which I did not receive till last night. I hope you received a letter from me some time ago; I mention this that I may not appear worse than I am, and likewise to hint to you that, when you receive this, you will be two letters in my debt. I hope your parliament has finished all its absurdities, and that you will be at leisure to come over here to attend your club; where you will do much more good than all the patriots in the world ever did to any body, viz. you will make very many of your friends extremely happy; and you know Goldsmith has informed us that no form of government ever contributed either to the happiness or misery of any one.—I saw a letter from Foote,

with an account of an Irish tragedy, the subject is Manlius, and the last speech which he makes when he is pushed off from the Tarpeian rock, is "Sweet Jesus, where am I going?" Pray send me word if it is true. We have a new comedy here, which is good for nothing; bad as it is, however, it succeeds very well, and has almost killed Goldsmith with envy. I have no news, either literary or political, to send you. Every body except myself, and about a million of vulgars, are in the country. I am closely confined, as Lady Di. expects to be so every hour. I am, my dear lord, very sincerely and affectionately yours,

T. BEAUCLERK.

TOPHAM BEAUCLERK, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD, Adelphi, February 12, 1774.

I HAVE this moment received your letter, and I need not tell you how happy it has made me, that Lady Charlemont is well, and yourself so much better. I can now give you a better reason for not writing sooner to you, than for any other thing that I ever did in my life. When Sir Charles Bingham* came from Ireland, I, as you may easily imagine, immediately inquired after you; he told me that you were very well, but in great affliction, having just lost your child. You cannot conceive how I was shocked with this

* The late Lord Lucan. He was a member of the Literary Club.

news ; not only by considering what you suffered on this occasion, but recollected that a foolish letter of mine, laughing at your Irish politics, would arrive just at that point of time. A bad joke at any time is a bad thing ; but when any attempt at pleasantry happens at a moment that a person is in great affliction, it certainly is the most odious thing in the world. I could not write to you to comfort you ; you will not wonder therefore that I did not write at all. I must now entreat you to lay aside your politics for some time, and to consider that the taking care of your health is one of the most public spirited things that you can possibly do ; for, notwithstanding your vapour about Ireland, I do not believe that you can very well spare one honest man.—Our politicians, on this side of the water, are all asleep ; but I hear they are to be awakened next Monday, by a printer, who is ordered to attend the bar of the house, for having abused Sir Fletcher Norton. They have already passed a vote that Sir Fletcher's character is immaculate, and will most certainly punish the printer very severely, if a trifling circumstance does not prevent them, viz. that the printer should, as he most probably will, refuse to attend.—Our club has dwindled away to nothing. Nobody attends but Mr. Chambers, and he is going to the East Indies. Sir Joshua and Goldsmith have got into such a round of pleasures that they have no time.—In my next I will send you a long history of all our friends, and particularly an account how twelve thousand pounds may be paid without advancing one single shilling. This is certainly

very convenient, and if you can get rid of all your feeling and morality before my next letter arrives, you may put it in practice, as probably it has not yet been introduced into Ireland. Believe me to be, my dear lord,

T. BEAUCLERK.

TOPHAM BEAUCLERK, ESQ. TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

Muswell Hill, Summer Quarters, July 18th, 1774.

MY DEAR LORD,

THAT it was my full intention to visit you in Ireland, and that it still remains so, is as true as that I love and esteem you more than any man upon this earth; but various accidents have hitherto hindered me, the last of which has been a violent illness, which obliges me to a constant attendance on Doctor Turton; but, in spite of him or nature itself, I will very soon pay you a visit. Business, it is true, I have none to keep me here; but you forget that I have business in Lancashire, and that I must go there when I come to you. Now you will please to recollect, that there is nothing in this world I so entirely hate as business of any kind, and that I pay you the greatest compliment I can do, when I risk the meeting with my own confounded affairs in order to have the pleasure of seeing you; but this I am resolved to do. The D—— is quite a new acquaintance; he says he is a scholar, and I believe him to be so. He seemed a good

natured man, and a man of parts, and one proof I am sure he gave of his understanding, by expressing a strong desire to be acquainted with you. I had recollection enough, however, not to give him a letter to you, as I suspect that a certain thing, called politics, might be the cause of a difference between you, particularly as he told me that he was an intimate friend of Rigby's. And if the old proverb is true, *Noscitur à socio*, I guessed that he was not a man after your own heart. Why should you be vexed to find that mankind are fools and knaves? I have known it so long, that every fresh instance of it amuses me, provided it does not immediately affect my friends or myself. Politicians do not seem to me to be much greater rogues than other people; and as their actions affect, in general, private persons less than other kinds of villany do, I cannot find that I am so angry with them. It is true that the leading men, in both countries, at present, are, I believe, the most corrupt, abandoned people in the nation;—but now that I am upon this worthy subject of human nature, I will inform you of a few particulars relating to the discovery of Otaheite, which Dr. Hawkesworth said placed the king above all the conquerors in the world; and if the glory is to be estimated by the mischief, I do not know whether he is not right. When Wallis first anchored off the island, two natives came alongside of the ship, without fear or distrust, to barter their goods with our people. A man, called the boat-keeper, who was in a boat that was tied to the ship, attempted to get the things from them without payment.

The savages resisted, and he struck one of them with the boat-hook, upon which they paddled away. In the morning great numbers came in canoes of all sizes about the ship. They behaved, however, in the most peaceable manner, still offering to exchange their commodities for any thing that they could obtain from us. The same trick was played by attempting to take away their things by force. This enraged them, and they had come prepared to defend themselves with such weapons as they had; they immediately began to fling stones, one of which went into the cabin window. Wallis, on this, ordered that the guns, loaded with grape shot, should be fired; this you may imagine immediately dispersed them. Some were drowned, many killed, and some few got on shore, where numbers of the natives were assembled. Wallis then ordered the great guns to be played, according to his phrase, upon them. This drove them off; when he still ordered the same pastime to be continued, in order to convince them, as he says, that our arms could reach them at such a distance. If you add to this, that the inhabitants of all these islands are eat up with vile disorders, you will find that men may be much worse employed than by doing the dirtiest job that ever was undertaken by the lowest of our clerk-ministers. These particulars I had from a man who went the last voyage, and had them from the gunner of Wallis's ship. We have one of the natives here, who was wounded in that infernal massacre.—There is another curiosity here, Mr. Bruce. His drawings are the most beautiful things you ever saw,

and his adventures more wonderful than those of Sinbad the sailor, and perhaps as true. I am much more afflicted with the account you send me of your health, than I am at the corruption of your ministers ; I always hated politics, and I now hate them ten times worse, as I have reason to think that they contribute towards your ill health. You do me great justice in thinking that whatever concerns you must interest me ; but as I wish you most sincerely to be perfectly happy, I cannot bear to think that the villanous proceedings of others should make you miserable ; for, in that case, undoubtedly you will never be happy.—Charles Fox is a member at the Turk's Head, but not till he was a patriot, and you know, if one repents, &c.—There is nothing new but Goldsmith's Retaliation, which you certainly have seen. Pray tell Lady Charlemont, from me, that I desire she may keep you from politics, as they do children from sweetmeats, that make them sick. Believe me to be, &c.

T. BEAUCLERK.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE HON. W. PITT.

Barton Pynsent, Oct. 9, 1773.

THURSDAY's post brought us no letter from the dear traveller : we trust this day will prove more satisfactory ; it is the happy day that gave us your brother, and will not be less in favour with all here, if it should give us about four o'clock an epistle from my dear William. By that hour,

I reckon, we shall be warm in our cups, and shall not fail to pour forth, with renewed joy, grateful libations over the much-wished tidings of your prosperous progress towards your destination. We compute that yesterday brought you to the venerable aspect of *alma mater* (Cambridge): and that you are invested to-day with the *toga virilis*. Your race of *manly* virtue and *useful* knowledge is now begun, and may the favour of Heaven smile upon the noble career.

Little — was really disappointed at not being in time to see you, a good mark for my young vivid friend. He is just as much compounded of the elements of *air* and *fire* as he was. A due proportion of terrestrial solidity will, I trust, come and make him perfect. How happy, my loved boy, is it, that your mamma and I can tell ourselves, there is at Cambridge *one*, without a beard, “and all the elements so mixed in him, that Nature might stand up and say, This is a man.” I now take leave for to-day, not meaning this for what James calls a *regular* letter, but a flying thought, that wings itself towards my absent William. Horses are ready, and all is birthday.

Bradshaw has shone this auspicious morning, in a very fine speech of congratulation, but I foresee “his sun sets weeping in the lowly west;” that is, a fatal bowl of punch will, before night, quench this luminary of oratory. Adieu again, and again, sweet boy; and if you acquire health and strength every time I wish them to you, you will be a second Samson, and, what is more, will, I am sure, keep your hair.

Every good wish attends your kind fellow-traveller and *chum*, nor will he be forgot in our flowing bowl to-day.

POSTSCRIPT BY LADY CHATHAM.

If more could be said expressive of feelings, my dearest dear boy, I would add a letter to this epistle, but as it is composed, I will only sign to its expressive contents, your fond and loving mother,

HESTER CHATHAM.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE HON. W. PITT.

Burton Pynsest, Oct. 30th, 1773.

With what ease of mind and joy of heart I write to my loved William, since Mr. Wilson's comfortable letter of Monday. I do not mean to address you as a sick man, I trust in Heaven that convalescent is the only title I am to give you in the ailing tribe, and that you are now enjoying the happy advantage of Dr. Glynn's acquaintance, as one of the cheerful and witty sons of Apollo, in his poetic, not his medical, attribute. But, though I indulge with inexpressible delight the thought of your returning health, I cannot help being a little in pain, lest you should make more haste than good speed to be well. Your mamma has been before me in suggesting that most useful proverb, *reculer pour*

mieux sauter, useful to all, but to the *ardent*, necessary. You may, indeed, my sweet boy, better than any one, practice this sage dictum, without any risk of being *thrown out* (as little James would say) in the *chase of learning*. All you want at present is *quiet*, with this, if your ardour *αγιορτυν* can be *kept in*, till you are stronger, you will make *noise* enough. How happy the task, my noble, amiable boy, to caution you *only against pursuing too much* all those liberal and praiseworthy things, to which less happy natures are perpetually to be spurred and driven; I will not tease you with too long a lecture in favour of *inaction*, and a competent *stupidity*, your two best *tutors* and *companions* at present. You have time to spare; consider there is but the *Encyclopædia*; and when you have mastered all that, what will remain? You will want, like Alexander, another world to conquer. Your mamma joins me in every word; and we know how much your affectionate mind can sacrifice to our earnest and tender wishes. Brothers and sisters are well, all feel about you, think and talk of you, as they ought. My affectionate remembrances go in great abundance to Mr. Wilson. *Vive, tale*, is the unceasing prayer of your truly loving father,

CHATHAM.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE HON. W. PITT.

Hayes, Sunday, July 17, 1774.

NEED I tell my dear William that his letter, received this morning, diffused general joy here? To know that he is well and happy, and to be happy ourselves, is one and the same thing. I am glad that chambers, hall, and tufted robe, continue to please, and make no doubt that all the *Nine*, in their several departments of charming, will sue for your love with all their powers of enchantment. I know too well the danger of a *new amour*, or of a *reviving passion*, not to have some fears for your discretion. Give any of these alluring ladies the meeting by *daylight*, and *in their turns*; not becoming the *slave* of any one of them; nor be drawn into late hours by the temptation of their sweet converse. I rejoice that college is not yet evacuated of its learned garrison; and I hope the governor of this fortress of science, the master, or his admirable aides-de-camp, the tutors, will not soon repair to their respective excursions. Dr. Brown, to whom I desire to present my best compliments, is very obliging in accommodating you with a stable. I hope with this aid Mr. Wilson's computation may not be out above one half, to bring it all near the mark. I conclude a horse's allowance at Cambridge is upon the scale of a sizer's commons. However it prove, I am glad to think you and he will find more convenience for riding at every spare hour that offers. Stucky will carry Mr. Wilson safely, and, I trust, not un-

pleasantly. The brothers of the turf may hold the solid contents of his shoulders and forehead somewhat cheap; but by Dan's leave, he is no uncreditable *clerical* steed. No news yet from Pitt. James is here the flower of school-boys. Your loving father,

CHATHAM.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE HON. W. PITT.

Hayes, Sept. 2, 1774.

I WRITE, my dearest William, the post just going out, only to thank you for your most welcome letter, and for the affectionate anxiety you express for my situation, left behind in the hospital, when our flying camp removed to Stowe. Gout has for the present subsided, and seems to intend deferring his favours till winter, if autumn will do its duty, and bless us with a course of steady weather; those days which Madame de Sevigné so beautifully paints, *des jours filés d'or et de soie*.

I have the pleasure to tell you, your mother and sisters returned perfectly well from Bucks, warm in praises of magnificent and princely Stowe, and full of due sentiments of the agreeable and kind reception they found there. No less than two dancings in the short time they passed there. One escape from a wasp's nest, which proved only an adventure to talk of, by the incomparable skill and presence of mind of Mr. Cotton, driving our girls in his carriage, with four very fine horses, and no postilion. They fell into an ambuscade of wasps, more fierce

than Pondours, who beset these coursers of spirit not inferior to Xanthus and Podarges, and stung them to madness ; when, disdaining the master's hand, he turned them short into a hedge, threw some of them, as he meant to do ; and leaping down, seized the bridles of the leaders, which afforded time for your sisters to get out safe and sound, their honour, in point of courage, intact, as well as their bones ; for they are celebrated not a little on their composure in this alarming situation. I rejoice that your time passes to your mind in the evacuated seat of the Muses. However, knowing that those heavenly ladies (unlike the London fair) delight most, and spread their choicest charms and treasures, in sweet retired solitude, I won't wonder that their true votary is happy to be alone with them. Mr. Pretyma will by no means spoil company, and I wish you joy of his return. How many commons have you lost of late ? What fences have you broken ? and in what lord of the manor's pond have any *strays of science* been found, since the famous adventure of catching the horses with such admirable address and alacrity ? I beg my affectionate compliments to Mr. Wilson, and hope you will both beware of an enclosed country for the future. Little James is still with us, doing penance for the *high living* so well described to you in Mrs. Pain's excellent epistle. All loves follow my sweet boy in more abundance than I have time or ability to express.

I desire my best compliments to the kind and obliging master, who loves Cicero and you.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM TO THE HON. W. PITT.

Hayes, Sept. 22, 1777.

How can I address my reviving pen so well as by addressing a few lines to the hope and comfort of my life, my dear William? You will have pleasure to see, under my own hand, that I mend every day, and that I am all but well. I have been this morning to Campden Place, and sustained most manfully a visit, and all the idle talk thereof, for about an hour by Mr. Norman's clock, and returned home, untired, to dinner, where I eat like a farmer. Lord Mahon has confounded, not convinced, the incorrigible *soû-disant* Dr. Wilson. Dr. Franklin's lightning, rebel as he is, stands proved the more innocent; and Wilson's nob's must yield to the pointed conductors. On Friday, Lord Mahon's indefatigable spirit is to exhibit another incendium to lord mayor, foreign ministers, and all lovers of philosophy and the good of society; and means to illuminate the horizon with a little bonfire of twelve hundred fagots and a double edifice. Had our dear friend been born sooner, Nero and the second Charles could never have amused themselves by reducing to ashes the two noblest cities in the world. My hand begins to demand repose, so with my best compliments to Aristotle, Homer, Thucydides, Xenophon, not forgetting the Civilians, and the Law of Nations' tribe. Adieu, my dearest William. Your ever most affectionate father,

CHATHAM,

WILLIAM JONES, ESQ. TO ROBERT ORME, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Duke Street, June 26th, 1773.

I WAS never less pleased with the study of the law than at this moment, when my attendance at Westminster Hall prevents me from thanking you in person for your most elegant and acceptable present, which shall ever be preserved amongst my literary treasures. Your history is not one of those books which a man reads once in a cursory manner, and then throws aside for ever ; there is no end of reading and approving of it, nor shall I ever desist giving myself that pleasure to the last year of my life. You may rely on this testimony, as it comes from one who not only was never guilty of flattery, but like Cæsar's wife, would never suffer himself to be suspected of it.

It is much to be regretted that the historical pieces of Lucceius are not preserved to us : by a letter or two of his, which are extant, he seems to have been a man of exquisite parts and taste. Cicero declares himself charmed with his way of writing, which makes me think that his works would have been far preferable to those of Sallust and Tacitus, whom I cannot help considering as the first corrupters of the Roman language and eloquence. As to our language, if yourself, and perhaps Lord Lyttleton, had not restored it to its native simplicity, we should soon have been reduced to a new dialect, &c. &c. I have been for the last five weeks at Oxford, where I took the degree of Master of Arts in the regular course. I was

much pressed to speak at the ensuing encaenia ; but when I had taken the pains to prepare an oration, in which there was nothing that could offend the most obsequious courtier, the persons who had urged me to write it were disappointed at not finding it a slavish compliment to the ministers, and exhorted me not to deliver it in the theatre without a great deal of softening, which determined me not to speak at all ; but as I am pleased with the composition, which is written wholly in the manner of the ancients, I shall print a few copies for my friends. See the loquacity of us writers ; you honour me with three kind and indulgent lines, and I send you in return as many rambling pages : but when friends cannot converse in person, they have no resource but conversing at a distance. I am, with great truth, most sincerely yours,

W. JONES.

WILLIAM JONES, ESQ. TO MR. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR,

Lamb's Buildings, June 30th, 1781.

I HAVE more than once sought, without having been so fortunate as to obtain a proper opportunity of thanking you very sincerely for the elegant compliment which you pay me, in a work abounding in elegance of all kinds.

My *Seven Arabian Poets* will see the light before next winter, and be proud to wait upon you in their English dress. Their wild productions will, I flatter myself, be thought interesting,

and not venerable merely on account of their antiquity.

In the mean while, let me request you to honour me with accepting a copy of a law tract, which is not yet published; the subject is so generally important, that I make no apology for sending you a professional work.

You must pardon my inveterate hatred of C. Octavianus, basely surnamed Augustus. I feel myself unable to forgive the death of Cicero, which, if he did not promote, he might have prevented. Besides, even Mæcenas knew the cruelty of his disposition, and ventured to reproach him with it. In short, I have not Christian charity for him.

With regard to Asiatic letters, a necessary attention to my profession will compel me wholly and eternally to abandon them, unless Lord North (to whom I am already under no small obligation) should think me worthy to concur in the improved administration of justice in Bengal, and should appoint me to supply the vacancy on the India bench. Were that appointment to take place this year, I should probably travel, for speed, through part of Egypt and Arabia, and should be able, in my way, to procure many eastern tracts of literature and jurisprudence. I might become a good Mahomedan lawyer before I reached Calcutta, and, in my vacations, should find leisure to explain, in my native language, whatever the Arabs, Persians, and Turks have written on science, history, and the fine arts.

My happiness by no means depends on obtaining this appointment, as I am in easy circumstances

without my profession, and have flattering prospects in it; but if the present summer and the ensuing autumn elapse without my receiving any answer, favourable or unfavourable, I shall be forced to consider that silence as a polite refusal, and, having given sincere thanks for past favours, shall entirely drop all thoughts of Asia, and, "deep as ever plummet sounded, shall drown my Persian books." If my politics have given offence, it would be manly in ministers to tell me so. I shall never be personally hostile to them, nor enlist under party banners of any colour; but I will never resign my opinions for interest; though I would cheerfully abandon them on conviction. My reason, such as it is, can only be controlled by better reason, to which I am ever open. As to my freedom of thought, speech, and action, I shall say what Charles XII. wrote under the map of Riga, "*Dieu me l'a donnée, la diable ne me l'ôtera pas.*" But the fair answer to this objection is, that my system is purely speculative, and has no relation to my seat on the bench in India, where I should hardly think of instructing the Gentoos in the maxims of the Athenians. I believe I should not have troubled you with this letter, if I did not fear that your attendance in parliament might deprive me of the pleasure of meeting you at the club next Tuesday; and I shall go to Oxford a few days after. At all times, and in all places, I shall ever be, with undissembled regard, dear sir, your much obliged and faithful servant,

W. JONES.

WILLIAM JONES, ESQ. TO MR. PRITCHARD.

Lamb's Building, 21 May (by the calendar,
21 Nov. by the weather), 1782.

MY DEAR PRITCHARD,

I HAVE called anxiously at the stationer's, every now and then, for the last month,—no letter from Oldbury : I have called there this morning with increasing anxiety,—no letter from Oldbury, or Thornbury, or Hawkesbury, or any other *bury*. Are you dead and buried in earnest, my dear Arthur, or are you ill? The last idea gives me alarm ; for it is impossible to conceive that you forget my existence, or that you stand upon the form of regular answers. Many thanks for yours dated 17th April—it was short, but agreeable to me. You will ask why I have not answered it, and will be anxious also for *my* health : I will inform you ; earnestly hoping that you will burn this, or at least take special care of it. We parted on the bank of the Severn, on Sunday (was it not?) the 14th of April. I reached Oxford on the Monday, and found letters in college, which I did not look at till I had dined in the common room ; I read them at six o'clock : one was from Lord Shelburne, dated the 9th, desiring to see me instantly : I put four horses to my chaise ; travelled all night, and saw his lordship early the next morning : the same day I was presented to all the new ministers. A great place had been kept open for me above a fortnight : not hearing from me, nor knowing where I was, they desponded and disposed of it. Particulars

you shall know when we meet: had parliament been dissolved, I should have had a seat in it immediately. I thought of you, and resolved, if possible, to procure you some genteel place in an office of state; this resolution I will never abandon. From that day to this I have been in hot water; you will see your friend more than par-boiled, unless we meet soon. I have had no time for writing by daylight, and I do not think it prudent to strain my eyes by candlelight. After all, in these five weeks, I have been on the point of being under-secretary of state, on the point of being a member of parliament, on the point of being an Indian judge; yet I am neither under-secretary, nor in parliament, nor a judge, nor likely to be either these five or six months. Sir Elijah Impey is recalled; but there is no hope of any vacancy being filled up this year, nor of any bill being passed this session. I have been mentioned in the cabinet, and have the highest interest. In the meanwhile our poor friend Mr. Paradise is ruining himself here, and losing his American estate into the bargain: to rescue him and his family from destruction I have consented to accompany him to Virginia, and we propose to set out next month: we have no time to lose. We shall return as soon as the business is finished; in five or six months. I shall then be in time, probably, for the judgeship, or some better thing. We shall go first to Paris, then to a French port, and have good accommodations on board a swift-sailing frigate: we shall sail directly to the Chesapeake. There will be no danger; and, to avoid delay in case of capture, we shall have passes

from Lord Keppell. Have you any objection, my dear Pritchard, to being of the party in this pleasant excursion? I mean in the capacity of my friend and secretary, with a very good allowance from me; and you might be sure of a handsome present from Paradise, who esteems you as much as I do: no one can esteem you more. You cannot increase or diminish my esteem by accepting or rejecting this offer: in either place you will stand first in my will (after my female friend); and, you know, I have no heir unprovided for. I may die at sea: life is always uncertain; and, if you go, I will leave you, in case of my death during the voyage, a thousand pounds, which I shall take with me in bills. If you wish to do something handsome for your mother during your short absence, I will take care that she shall receive punctually from my agents what you choose to give her. Your friend at Midgham cannot object, as you will return in a few months. If there were any danger, I would not press you. I use no persuasion; I do not presume to think of persuading any one: I only propose; and, if you accept my proposal, you will give me pleasure; if you reject it, no pain. As to use, you will be of greater use to us both in reading and writing than I can describe. Some secretary I must have.

22nd May.

Here I left off, to dine with the Bishop of St. Asaph,—who, do you think, were at table? None less than your future uncle and aunt, Sir G*****

and Lady M****,—between us, a stupid uncle and no very elegant aunt! but of this not a word. I have just read the newspaper, and am sorry to see old Mr. Poyntz, of Somersetshire, in the Gazette. By the way, could not you make your visit to Midgham now upon your little gray, so that we might have a chance of meeting there or at Oxford, where I shall soon spend a day or two? I conclude, that my friends at Midgham will come to town for a little amusement at Ranelagh, some time this month. In short, my dear Pritchard, the case is very simple—I have not abandoned India, but shall not be able to go this year; in the meanwhile I shall accompany my friend Paradise, in order to prevent his ruin, to Virginia, and shall return before next spring fleet sails for India: if you will be of the party, I will ensure you much pleasure, much health, much knowledge of the world; and a knowledge of men and things will be necessary to qualify you for any office that my interest may hereafter procure for you. I would add much profit, if I did not know your disinterestedness; but no man, however generous, ought to be so disinterested as to neglect any honourable mode of securing his independence by acquiring a fortune: you will be wholly on the footing of a gentleman. Paradise will have his servant, so that he will give you no trouble, except perhaps in writing for him and making his pens, for he says he can write with none so well as with yours. As we go on board a man-of-war, we shall have a charming voyage, and see a delightful country, as your

sister will tell you. Should any accident happen, or should you change your mind at Paris, you may return easily, and I will bear all your expenses back. We shall go from Dover to Calais, but this is a secret. If I die in America, you may return with Paradise, who would treat you as a friend and a gentleman. Let me add, that, if I should be named a commissioner for peace, you will be better qualified to act as my secretary by knowing French, so well as you will know it, by conversing with the French officers on board, and by having been in America. I trust you are in perfect health: the journey and voyage will confirm it; and, if you should again be ill, you may have as good advice and assistance on board a French ship of war as in London. Neither you nor I should fear to engage our enemies; but we should not fight our countrymen; and, in case of an engagement (which is not likely to happen), we should be employed in assisting the wounded, and following the directions of the surgeon. I have stated the good and the bad of this reasonable scheme; but wish we could converse about it for an hour or two. If you reject it, and choose rather to risque the haughty behaviour of some noble or wealthy master, I will leave my opinion of your excellent character (as far as I have been able to discover it) with my friend Mr. Poyntz, who knows how much I value you; and, on my return, I will retain my resolution of contributing all in my power to your advancement and fortune here or in India. Write to me soon with all that frank-

ness, spirit, and manliness, which I love, and which we both possess in a high degree. You know my opinion, that all honest men are equal, and the prince and peasant on a level; therefore as I am not a prince, nor you a peasant, I could wish that you would put yourself wholly on a footing with me, and write without form and stiffness. I reckon you will receive this next Friday, and I shall be anxious to know that you have received it. The manuscript which you were to copy has been packed up this month, but my incessant hurry has prevented my sending it. Adieu! and believe that no man has a firmer friendship for another than that which is sincerely professed for you, my dear Arthur, by yours ever,

W. JONES.

Could not your little gray carry you *en beau matin* to Midgham, and, after such a stay at Mr. Poyntz's as you might think discreet, could he not either make a visit to my little gray at Oxford, or bring you to London, while Mrs. N. stays here, that you might accompany her to Ranelagh? We shall not set out this fortnight; but lose no time in considering my proposal; and be sure, that you will be of infinite use to Mr. Paradise and me. Observe, that as a will is always revocable, I would readily give you a bond (which would bind my heirs) to leave you a thousand pounds stock in case of my death during the voyage or journey; but I do not hold out this as a lure, for I repeat that, though I

wish you to be of the party, yet I have no pretensions to persuade you, and I know your contempt of gain. Mr. Paradise and I shall want some one, who understands farming, to direct in leaving orders for the management of the land, if recovered.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO THE REV.
WILLIAM UNWIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

July, —79.

WHEN I was at Margate, it was an excursion of pleasure to go to see Ramsgate. The pier, I remember, was accounted a most excellent piece of stone work, and as such I found it. By this time, I suppose, it is finished, and surely it is no small advantage, that you have an opportunity of observing how nicely those great stones are put together, as often as you please, without either trouble or expense. * * * * *

There was not, at that time, much to be seen in the Isle of Thanet, besides the beauty of the country, and the fine prospects of the sea, which are no where surpassed except in the Isle of Wight, or upon some parts of the coast of Hampshire. One sight, however, I remember, engaged my curiosity, and I went to see it. A fine piece of ruins, built by the late Lord Holland, at a great expense, which, the day after I saw it, tumbled down for nothing. Perhaps, therefore, it is still a ruin; and if it is, I would advise you by all means to visit it, as it must have been much improved by this fortunate incident. It is

hardly possible to put stones together with that air of wild and magnificent disorder which they are sure to acquire by falling of their own accord.

I remember (the last thing I mean to remember upon this occasion) that Sam Cox, the counsel, walking by the seaside, as if absorbed in deep contemplation, was questioned about what he was musing on. He replied, "I was wondering that such an almost infinite and unwieldy element should produce a *sprat*."

Our love attends your whole party. Yours affectionately,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO MRS. NEWTON.

DEAR MADAM,

June, 1780.

WHEN I write to Mr. Newton, he answers me by letter; when I write to you, you answer me in fish. I return you many thanks for the mackerel and lobster. They assured me in terms as intelligible as pen and ink could have spoken, that you still remember *Orchard-side*; and though they never spoke in their lives, and it was still less to be expected from them that they should speak being dead, they gave us an assurance of your affection that corresponds exactly with that which Mr. Newton expresses towards us in all his letters. For my own part, I never in my life began a letter more at a venture than the present. It is possible that I may finish it, but perhaps more than probable that I shall not. I have had

several indifferent nights, and the wind is easterly; two circumstances so unfavourable to me in all my occupations, but especially that of writing, that it was with the greatest difficulty I could even bring myself to attempt it.

You have never yet perhaps been made acquainted with the unfortunate Tom F——'s misadventure. He and his wife, returning from Haslope fair, were coming down Weston Lane; to wit, themselves, their horse, and their great wooden panniers, at ten o'clock at night. The horse, having a lively imagination and very weak nerves, fancied he either saw or heard something, but has never been able to say what. A sudden fright will impart activity, and a momentary vigour, even to lameness itself. Accordingly, he started, and sprang from the middle of the road to the side of it, with such surprising alacrity, that he dismounted the gingerbread baker, and his gingerbread wife, in a moment. Not contented with this effort, nor thinking himself yet out of danger, he proceeded as fast as he could to a full gallop, rushed against the gate at the bottom of the lane, and opened it for himself, without perceiving that there was any gate there. Still he galloped, and with a velocity and momentum continually increasing, till he arrived at Olney. I had been in bed about ten minutes, when I heard the most uncommon and unaccountable noise that can be imagined. It was, in fact, occasioned by the clattering of tin patty-pans and a Dutch-oven against the sides of the panniers. Much gingerbread was picked up in the street, and Mr. Lucy's windows were broken all to

pieces. Had this been all, it would have been a comedy, but we learned the next morning, that the poor woman's collar-bone was broken, and she has hardly been able to resume her occupation since.

What is added on the other side *, if I could have persuaded myself to write sooner, would have reached you sooner; 'tis about ten days old * * * * *

The male Dove was smoking a pipe, and the female Dove was sewing, while she delivered herself as above. This little circumstance may lead you perhaps to guess what pair I had in my eye. Yours, dear madam,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO THE REV.
WILLIAM UNWIN.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Feb. 6, 1781.

MUCH good may your humanity do you, as it does so much good to others. You can no where find objects more entitled to your pity than where your pity seeks them. A man whose vices and irregularities have brought his liberty and life into danger, will always be viewed with an eye of compassion by those who understand what human nature is made of. And while we acknowledge the severity of the law to be founded upon principles of necessity and justice, and are glad that there is such a barrier provided for the peace

* The poem of "The Doves." Vide Cowper's poems. Vol. I.

of society, if we consider that the difference between ourselves and the culprit is not of our own making, we shall be, as you are, tenderly affected with the view of his misery, and not the less so because he has brought it upon himself. I look upon the worst man in Chelmsford gaol with a more favourable eye than upon —, who claims a servants' wages from one who never was his master.

I give you joy of your own hair. No doubt you are a considerable gainer in your appearance by being disperiwigged. The best wig is that which most resembles the natural hair; why then should he that has hair enough of his own have recourse to imitation? I have little doubt, but that if an arm or a leg could have been taken off with as little pain as attends the amputation of a curl or a lock of hair, the natural limb would have been thought less becoming, or less convenient, by some men, than a wooden one, and been disposed of accordingly.

Yours ever,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN
NEWTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Aug. 16, 1781.

I MIGHT date my letter from the green-house, which we have converted into a summer parlour. The walls hung with garden mats, and the floor covered with a carpet, the sun too in a great manner excluded, by an awning of mats, which

forbids him to shine any where except upon the carpet, it affords us by far the pleasantest retreat in Olney. We eat, drink, and sleep, where we always did ; but here we spend all the rest of our time, and find that the sound of the wind in the trees, and the singing of birds, are much more agreeable to our ears than the incessant barking of dogs and screaming of children.. It is an observation that naturally occurs upon the occasion, and which many other occasions furnish an opportunity to make, that people long for what they have not, and overlook the good in their possession. This is so true in the present instance, that for years past I should have thought myself happy to enjoy a retirement even less flattering to my natural taste than this in which I am now writing ; and have often looked wistfully at a snug cottage, which on account of its situation at a distance from noise and disagreeable objects, seemed to promise me all I could wish or expect, so far as happiness may be said to be local ; never once adverting to this comfortable nook, which affords me all that could be found in the most sequestered hermitage, with the advantage of having all those accommodations near at hand which no hermitage could possibly afford me.— People imagine they should be happy in circumstances, which they would find insupportably burthensome in less than a week. A man that has been clothed in fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, envies the peasant under a thatched hovel ; who, in return, envies him as much his palace and his pleasure-ground. Could they change situations, the fine gentleman would

find his ceilings were too low, and that his casements admitted too much wind ; and that he had no cellar for his wine, and no wine to put in his cellar. These, with a thousand other mortifying deficiencies, would shatter his romantic project into innumerable fragments in a moment. The clown, at the same time, would find the accession of so much unwieldly treasure an incumbrance quite incompatible with an hour's ease. His choice would be puzzled by variety. He would drink to excess, because he would foresee no end of his abundance ; and he would eat himself sick for the same reason. He would have no idea of any other happiness than sensual gratification ; would make himself a beast, and die of his good fortune. The rich gentleman had, perhaps, or might have had, if he pleased, at the shortest notice, just such a recess as this ; but if he had it, he overlooked it, or, if he had it not, forgot that he might command it whenever he would. The rustic, too, was actually in possession of some blessings, which he was a fool to relinquish, but which he could neither see nor feel, because he had the daily and constant use of them ; such as good health, bodily strength, a head and a heart that never ached, and temperance, to the practice of which he was bound by necessity, that, humanly speaking, was a pledge and a security for the continuance of them all.

Thus I have sent you a schoolboy's theme. When I write to you, I do not write without thinking, but always without premeditation : the consequence is, that such thoughts as pass through

my head when I am not writing, make the subject of my letters to you.

Johnson sent me lately a sort of apology for his printer's negligence, with his promise of greater diligence for the future. There was need enough of both. I have received but one sheet since you left us. Still, indeed, I see that there is time enough before us; but I see likewise that no length of time can be sufficient for the accomplishment of a work that does not go forward. I know not yet whether he will add *Conversation* to those poems already in his hands, nor do I care much. No man ever wrote such quantities of verse, as I have written this last year, with so much indifference about the event, or rather, with so little ambition of public praise. My pieces are such as may possibly be made useful. The more they are approved, the more likely they are to spread, and consequently the more likely to attain the end of usefulness; which, as I said once before, except my present amusement, is the only end I propose. And even in the pursuit of this purpose, commendable as it is in itself, I have not the spur I should once have had;—my labour must go unrewarded, and as Mr. R—— once said, I am raising a scaffold before a house that others are to live in, and not I.

I have left myself no room for politics, which I thought, when I began, would have been my principal theme. Yours, my dear sir,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Nov. 26, 1781.

I THANK you much for your letter, which, without obliging me to travel to Wargrave at a time of year journeying is not very agreeable, has introduced me, in the most commodious manner, to a perfect acquaintance with your neat little garden, your old cottage, and, above all, your most prudent and sagacious landlady. As much as I admire her, I admire much more that philosophical temper with which you seem to treat her; for I know few characters more provoking, to me at least, than the selfish, who are never honest, especially if, while they determine to pick your pocket, they have not ingenuity enough to conceal their purpose. But you are perfectly in the right, and act just as I would endeavour to do on the occasion. You sacrifice every thing to a retreat you admire, and if the natural indolence of my disposition did not forsake me, so would I.

You might as well apologise for sending me forty pounds, as for writing about yourself. Of the two ingredients, I hardly know which made your letter the more agreeable (observe, I do not say the most acceptable). The draft, indeed, was welcome; but, though it was so, yet it did not make me laugh. I laughed heartily at the account you give me of yourself, and your landlady, Dame Saveall, whose picture you have drawn, though not with a flattering hand, yet, I

dare say, with a strong resemblance. As to you, I have never seen so much of you since I saw you in London, where you and I have so often made ourselves merry with each other's humour, yet never gave each other a moment's pain by doing so. We are both humourists, and it is well for your wife, and my Mrs. Unwin, that they have alike found out the way to deal with us.

More thanks to Mrs. Hill for her intentions. She has the true enthusiasm of a gardener, and I can pity her under her disappointment, having so large a share of that commodity myself.

Yours, my dear sir, affectionately,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Jan. 31, 1782.

HAVING thanked you for a barrel of very fine oysters, I should have nothing more to say, if I did not determine to say every thing that may happen to occur. The political world affords us no very agreeable subject at present, nor am I sufficiently conversant with it, to do justice to so magnificent a theme, if it did. A man that lives as I do, whose chief occupation, at this season of the year, is to walk ten times in a day from the fireside to his cucumber-frame and back again, cannot show his wisdom more, if he has any wisdom to show, than by leaving the mysteries of government to the management of persons, in

point of situation and information, much better qualified for the business. Suppose not, however, that I am perfectly an unconcerned spectator, or that I take no interest at all in the affairs of my country; far from it—I read the news—I see that things go wrong in every quarter. I meet, now and then, with an account of some disaster that seems to be the indisputable progeny of treachery, cowardice, or a spirit of faction; I recollect that in those happier days, when you and I could spend our evening in enumerating victories and acquisitions, that seemed to follow each other in a continued series, there was some pleasure in being a politician; and a man might talk away upon so entertaining a subject, without danger of becoming tiresome to others, or incurring weariness himself. When poor Bob White brought me the news of Boscawen's success off the coast of Portugal, how did I leap for joy! When Hawke demolished Confians, I was still more transported. But nothing could express my rapture, when Wolfe made the conquest of Quebec. I am not, therefore, I suppose, destitute of true patriotism, but the course of public events has, of late, afforded me no opportunity to exert it. I cannot rejoice, because I see no reason; and I will not murmur, because for that I can find no good one. And let me add, he that has seen both sides of fifty, has lived to little purpose, if he has not other views of the world than he had when he was much younger. He finds, if he reflects at all, that it will be to the end, what it has been from the beginning—a

shifting, uncertain, fluctuating scene; that nations, as well as individuals, have their seasons of infancy, youth, and age. If he be an Englishman, he will observe that ours, in particular, is affected with every symptom of decay, and is already sunk into a state of decrepitude. I am reading Mrs. M'Aulay's History. I am not quite such a superannuated simpleton, as to suppose that mankind were wiser or much better, when I was young, than they are now. But I may venture to assert, without exposing myself to the charge of dotage, that the men whose integrity, courage, and wisdom broke the bands of tyranny, established our constitution upon its own true basis, and gave a people, overwhelmed with the scorn of all countries, an opportunity to emerge into a state of the highest respect and estimation, make a better figure in history than any of the present day are likely to do, when their pretty harangues are forgotten, and nothing shall survive but the remembrance of the views and motives with which they made them.

My dear friend, I have written at random, in every sense, neither knowing what sentiments I should broach, when I began, nor whether they would accord with yours. Excuse a rustic, if he errs on such a subject, and believe me sincerely yours,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dec. 7, 1782.

At seven o'clock this evening, being the seventh of December, I imagine I see you in your box at the coffeehouse. No doubt the waiter, as ingenious and adroit as his predecessors were before him, raises the teapot to the ceiling with his right hand, while in his left the teacup, descending almost to the floor, receives a limpid stream; limpid in its descent, but no sooner has it reached its destination, then frothing and foaming to the view, it becomes a roaring syllabub.— This is the nineteenth winter since I saw you in this situation; and if nineteen more pass over me before I die, I shall still remember a circumstance we have often laughed at.

How different is the complexion of your evenings and mine! yours, spent amid the ceaseless hum that proceeds from the inside of fifty noisy and busy periwigs; mine, by a domestic fireside, in a retreat as silent as retirement can make it,— where no noise is made but what we make for our own amusement. For instance, here are two rustics, and your humble servant in company.— One of the ladies has been playing on the harpsichord, while I, with the other, have been playing at battledore and shuttlecock. A little dog, in the meantime, howling under the chair of the former, performed in the vocal way, to admiration. This entertainment over, I began my letter, and having nothing more important to communi-

cate, have given you an account of it. I know you love dearly to be idle, when you can find an opportunity to be so; but as such opportunities are rare with you, I thought it possible that a short description of the idleness I enjoy might give you pleasure. The happiness we cannot call our own, we yet seem to possess, while we sympathise with our friends who can.

The papers tell me that peace is at hand, and that it is at a great distance; that the siege of Gibraltar is abandoned, and that it is still to be continued. It is happy for me, that though I love my country, I have but little curiosity.—There was a time when these contradictions would have distressed me; but I have learnt by experience, that it is best for little people like myself to be patient, and to wait till time affords the intelligence which no speculations of theirs can ever furnish.

I thank you for a fine cod with oysters, and hope that, ere long, I shall have to thank you for Elliott's medicines. Every time I feel the least uneasiness in either eye, I tremble lest, my Esculapius being departed, my infallible remedy should be lost for ever. Adieu. My respects to Mrs. Hill.

Yours, faithfully,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN
NEWTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Jan. 26, 1783.

It is reported among persons of the best intelligence at Olney—the barber, the schoolmaster, and the drummer of a corps quartered at this place, that the belligerent powers are at last reconciled, the articles of the treaty adjusted, and that peace is at the door. I saw this morning, at nine o'clock, a group of about twelve figures very closely engaged in a conference, as I suppose, upon the same subject. The scene of consultation was a blacksmith's shed, very comfortably screened from the wind, and directly opposed to the morning sun. Some held their hands behind them, some had them folded across their bosom, and others had thrust them into their breeches pockets. Every man's posture bespoke a pacific turn of mind ; but the distance being too great for their words to reach me, nothing transpired. I am willing, however, to hope that the secret will not be a secret long, and that you and I, equally interested in the event, though not, perhaps, equally well informed, shall soon have an opportunity to rejoice in the completion of it. The powers of Europe have clashed with each other to a fine purpose ; that the Americans, at length declared independent, may keep themselves so, if they can ; and that what the parties, who have thought proper to dispute upon that point, have wrested from each other, in the course of the conflict, may be, in the issue of

it, restored to the right owner. Nations may be guilty of a conduct that would render an individual infamous for ever; and yet carry their heads high, talk of their glory, and despise their neighbours. Your opinions and mine, I mean our political ones, are not exactly of a piece, yet I cannot think otherwise upon this subject than I have always done. England, more, perhaps, through the fault of her generals than her councils, has in some instances acted with a spirit of cruel animosity she was never chargeable with till now. But this is the worst that can be said. On the other hand, the Americans, who, if they had contented themselves with a struggle for lawful liberty, would have deserved applause, seem to me to have incurred the guilt of parricide, by renouncing their parent, by making her ruin their favourite object, and by associating themselves with her worst enemy for the accomplishment of their purpose. France, and of course Spain, have acted a treacherous, a thievish part. They have stolen America from England, and whether they are able to possess themselves of that jewel or not hereafter, it was doubtless what they intended. Holland appears to me in a meaner light than any of them. They quarrelled with a friend for an enemy's sake. The French led them by the nose; and the English have thrashed them for suffering it. My views of the contest being, and having been always such, I have consequently brighter hopes for England than her situation some time since seemed to justify. She is the only injured party. America may, perhaps, call her the aggressor;

but if she were so, America has not only repelled the injury, but done a greater. As to the rest, if perfidy, treachery, avarice, and ambition can prove their cause to have been a rotten one, those proofs are found upon them. I think, therefore, that whatever scourge may be prepared for England, on some future day, her ruin is not yet to be expected.

Acknowledge, now, that I am worthy of a place under the shed I described, and that I should make no small figure among the *quidnuncs* of Olney.

I wish the society you have formed may prosper. Your subjects will be of greater importance, and discussed with more sufficiency. The earth is a grain of sand, but the spiritual interests of man are commensurate with the heavens.

Pray remind Mr. Bull, who has too much genius to have a good memory, that he has an account to settle for Mrs. Unwin with her grocer, and give our love to him. Accept for yourself and Mrs. Newton your just share of the same commodity, with our united thanks for a very fine barrel of oysters. This, indeed, is rather commending the barrel than its contents. I should say, therefore, for a barrel of very fine oysters. Yours, my dear friend, as ever, •

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN
NEWTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Nov. 30, 1783.

I HAVE neither long visits to pay nor to receive, nor ladies to spend hours in telling me that which might be told in five minutes, yet often find myself obliged to be an economist of time, and to make the most of a short opportunity. Let our station be as retired as it may, there is no want of playthings and avocations, nor much need to seek them, in this world of ours. Business, or what presents itself to us under that imposing character, will find us out, even in the stillest retreat, and plead its importance, however trivial in reality, as a just demand upon our attention. It is wonderful how by means of such real or seeming necessities, my time is stolen away. I have just time to observe that time is short, and by the time I have made the observation time is gone. I have wondered in former days at the patience of the antediluvian world; that they could endure a life almost millenary, with so little variety as seems to have fallen to their share. It is probable that they had much fewer employments than we. Their affairs lay in a much narrower compass; their libraries were indifferently furnished; philosophical researches were carried on with much less industry and acuteness of penetration, and fiddles, perhaps, were not even invented. How then could seven or eight hundred years of life be supportable? I have asked this question formerly, and

been at a loss to resolve it; but I think I can answer it now. I will suppose myself born a thousand years before Noah was born or thought of. I rise with the sun; I worship; I prepare my breakfast; I swallow a bucket of goat's milk, and a dozen of good sizeable cakes. I fasten a new string to my bow, and my youngest boy, a lad of about thirty years of age, having played with my arrows till he has stripped them of all the feathers, I find myself obliged to repair them. The morning is thus spent in preparing for the chase, and it is become necessary that I should dine. I dig up my roots; I wash them; I find them not done enough, I boil them again; my wife is angry; we dispute; we settle the point; but in the mean time the fire goes out, and must be kindled again. All this is very amusing. I hunt; I bring home the prey; with the skin of it I mend an old coat, or I make a new one. By this time the day is far spent; I feel myself fatigued, and retire to rest. Thus, what with tilling the ground, and eating the fruit of it, hunting and walking, and running, and mending old clothes, and sleeping and rising again, I can suppose an inhabitant of the primæval world so much occupied as to sigh over the shortness of life, and to find at the end of many centuries that they had all slipped through his fingers, and were passed like a shadow. What a wonder then that I, who live in a day of so much greater refinement, when there is so much more to be wanted, and wished, and to be enjoyed, should feel myself now and then pinched in point of

opportunity, and at some loss for leisure to fill four sides of a sheet like this? Thus, however, it is; and if the ancient gentlemen, to whom I have referred, and their complaints of the disproportion of time to the occasions they had for it, will not serve me as an excuse, I must even plead guilty, and confess that I am often in haste when I have no good reason for being so.

This by way of introduction: now for my letter. Mr. Scott is desired by Mr. De Coetlegon to contribute to the Theological Review, of which, I suppose, that gentleman is a manager. He says he has insured your assistance, and at the same time desires mine, either in prose or verse. He did well to apply to you, because you can afford him substantial help; but as for me, had he known me better, he would never have suspected me for a theologian, either in rhyme or otherwise.

Lord Dartmouth's Mr. Wright spent near two hours with me this morning; a respectable old man, whom I always see with pleasure, both for his master's sake and for his own. I was glad to learn from him that his lordship has better health than he has enjoyed for some years. Believe me, my dear friend, your affectionate,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO THE REV. JOHN
NEWTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

July, 1786.

I AM not glad that I am obliged to apologize for an interval of three weeks that have elapsed since the receipt of yours ; but not having it in my power to write oftener than I do, I am glad that my reason is such a one as you admit. In truth, my time is very much occupied ; and the more because I not only have a long and laborious work in hand, for such it would prove at any rate, but because I make it a point to bestow my utmost attention upon it, and to give it all the finishing that the most scrupulous accuracy can command. As soon as breakfast is over, I retire to my nutshell of a summerhouse, which is my verse-manufactory, and here I abide seldom less than three hours, and not often more. In the afternoon I return to it again ; and all the daylight that follows, except what is devoted to a walk, is given to Homer. It is well for me that a course which is now become necessary is so much my choice. The regularity of it, indeed, has been, in the course of this last week, a little interrupted, by the arrival of my dear cousin, Lady Hesketh ; but with the new week I shall, as they say, turn over a new leaf, and put myself under the same rigorous discipline as before. Something, and not a little, is due to the feelings that the sight of the kindest relation that ever man was blessed with must needs give birth to after so long a separation. But she, whose

anxiety for my success is, I believe, even greater than my own, will take care that I shall not play truant and neglect my proper business. It was an observation of a sensible man, whom I knew well in ancient days (I mean when I was very young), that people are never in reality happy when they boast much of being so. I feel myself accordingly well content to say, without any enlargement on the subject, that an inquirer after happiness might travel far, and not find a happier trio than meet every day, either in our parlour, or in the parlour at the vicarage. I will not say that mine is not occasionally somewhat dashed with the sable hue of those notions, concerning myself and my situation, that have occupied, or rather possessed me so long: but on the other hand, I can also affirm, that my cousin's affectionate behaviour to us both, the sweetness of her temper, and the sprightliness of her conversation, relieve me in no small degree from the pressure of them.

Mrs. Unwin is greatly pleased with your Sermons, and has told me so repeatedly; and the pleasure they have given her awaits me also in due time, as I am well and confidently assured: both because the subject of them is the greatest and the most interesting that can fall under the pen of any writer, and because no writer can be better qualified to discuss it judiciously and feelingly than yourself. The third set with which you favoured us, we destine to Lady Hesketh; and in so disposing of them, are inclined to believe that we shall not err far from the mark at which you yourself directed them.

Our affectionate remembrances attend yourself and Mrs. Newton, to which you acquired an everlasting right while you dwelt under the roof where we dined yesterday. It is impossible that we should set our foot over the threshold of the vicarage, without recollecting all your kindness. Yours, my dear friend,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO MRS. KING.

MY DEAR MADAM,

June 19, 1788.

You must think me a tardy correspondent, unless you have had charity enough for me to suppose that I have met with other hinderances than those of indolence and inattention. With these I cannot charge myself, for I am never idle by choice; and inattentive to you I certainly have not been; but, on the contrary, can safely affirm that every day I have thought on you. My silence has been occasioned by a malady to which I have all my life been subject—an inflammation of the eyes. The last sudden change of weather, from excessive heat to a wintry degree of cold, occasioned it, and at the same time gave me a pinch of the rheumatic kind; from both which disorders I have but just recovered. I do not suppose that our climate has been much altered since the days of our forefathers, the Picts; but certainly the human constitution in this country has been altered much. Inured as we are from our cradles to every vicissitude in a climate more various than

any other, and in possession of all that modern refinement has been able to contrive for our security, we are just as subject to blights as the tenderest blossoms of spring; and are so well admonished of every change in the atmosphere by our bodily feelings, as hardly to have any need of a weatherglass to mark them. For this we are, no doubt, indebted to the multitude of our accommodations; for it was not possible to retain the hardiness that originally belonged to our race, under the delicate management to which for many ages we have now been accustomed. I can hardly doubt that a bull-dog or a game cock might be made just as susceptible of injuries from weather as myself, were he dieted and in all respects accommodated as I am. Or if the project did not succeed in the first instance (for we ourselves did not become what we are at once), in process of time, however, and in a course of many generations, it would certainly take effect. Let such a dog be fed in his infancy with pap, Naples biscuit, and boiled chicken; let him be wrapped in flannel at night, sleep on a good feather bed, and ride out in a coach for an airing; and if his posterity do not become slight limbed, puny, and valetudinarian, it will be a wonder. Thus our parents, and their parents, and the parents of both were managed, and thus ourselves; and the consequence is, that instead of being weather-proof, even without clothing, furs and flannels are not warm enough to defend us. It is observable, however, that though we have by these means lost much of our pristine vigour, our days are not the fewer. We live as

long as those whom, on account of the sturdiness of their frame, the poets supposed to have been the progeny of oaks. Perhaps too they had little feeling, and for that reason also might be imagined to be so descended. For a very robust athletic habit seems inconsistent with much sensibility. But sensibility is the *sine quâ non* of real happiness. If, therefore, our lives have not been shortened, and if our feelings have been rendered more exquisite as our habit of body has become more delicate, on the whole, perhaps, we have no cause to complain, but are rather gainers by our degeneracy.

Do you consider what you do, when you ask one poet his opinion of another? Yet I think I can give you an honest answer to your question, and without the least wish to nibble. Thomson was admirable in description; but it always seemed to me that there was somewhat of affectation in his style, and that his numbers are not well harmonized. I could wish too, with Dr. Johnson, that he had confined himself to this country; for when he describes what he never saw, one is forced to read him with some allowance for possible misrepresentation. He was, however, a true poet, and his lasting fame has proved it. Believe me, my dear madam, with my best respects to Mr. King, most truly yours,

W. C.

P. S. I am extremely sorry that you have been so much indisposed, and hope that your next will bring me a more favourable account of your

health. I know not why, but I rather suspect that you do not allow yourself sufficient air and exercise. The physicians call them non-naturals, I suppose to deter their patients from the use of them.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO MRS. KING.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Aug. 28, 1778.

SHOULD you discard me from the number of your correspondents, you would treat me as I seem to deserve, though I do not actually deserve it. I have lately been engaged with company at our house, who resided with us five weeks, and have had much of the rheumatism into the bargain. Not in my fingers, you will say.—True. But you know as well as I, that pain, be it where it may, indisposes us to writing.

You express some degree of wonder that I found you out to be sedentary, at least much a stayer within doors, without any sufficient data for my direction. Now if I should guess your figure and stature with equal success, you will deem me not only a poet but a conjurer. Yet in fact I have no pretensions of that sort. I have only formed a picture of you in my own imagination, as we ever do of a person of whom we think much, though we have never seen that person. Your height I conceive to be about five feet five inches, which, though it would make a short man, is yet height enough for a woman. If you insist on an inch or two more, I have no

objection. You are not very fat, but somewhat inclined to be fat, and unless you allow yourself a little more air and exercise, will incur some danger of exceeding in your dimensions before you die. Let me, therefore, once more recommend to you to walk a little more, at least in your garden, and to amuse yourself occasionally with pulling up here and there a weed, for it will be an inconvenience to you to be much fatter than you are, at a time of life when your strength will be naturally on the decline. I have given you a fair complexion, a slight tinge of the rose in your cheeks, dark brown hair, and, if the fashion would give you leave to show it, an open and well formed forehead. To all this I add a pair of eyes not quite black, but nearly approaching to that hue, and very animated. I have not absolutely determined on the shape of your nose, or the form of your mouth; but should you tell me that I have in other respects drawn a tolerable likeness, have no doubt but I can describe them too. I assure you that though I have a great desire to read them, I have never seen Lavater, nor have availed myself in the least of any of his rules on this occasion. Oh, madam! if with all that sensibility of yours, which exposes you to so much sorrow, and necessarily must expose you to it, in a world like this, I have had the good fortune to make you smile, I have then painted you, whether with a strong resemblance, or with none at all, to a very good purpose.

I had intended to have sent you a little poem, which I have lately finished, but have no room to

transcribe it. You shall have it by another opportunity. Breakfast is on the table, and my time also fails, as well as my paper. I rejoice that a cousin of yours found my volumes agreeable to him; for, being your cousin, I will be answerable for his good taste and judgment.

When I wrote last I was in mourning for a dear and much valued uncle, Ashley Cowper. He died at the age of eighty-six. My best respects attend Mr. King; and I am, dear madam, most truly yours,

W. C.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO MRS. KING.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Oct. 11, 1788.

You are perfectly secure from all danger of being overwhelmed with presents from me. It is not much that a poet can possibly have it in his power to give. When he has presented his own works, he may be supposed to have exhausted all means of donation. They are his only superfluity. There was a time, but that time was before I commenced writer for the press, when I amused myself in a way somewhat similar to yours; allowing, I mean, for the difference between masculine and female operations. The scissors and the needle are your chief implements; mine were the chisel and the saw. In those days you might have been in some danger of too plentiful a return for your favours. Tables, such as they were, and joint-stools such as never were, might have

travelled to Perton Hall in most inconvenient abundance. But I have long since discontinued this practice, and many others which I found it necessary to adopt, that I might escape the worst of all evils, both in itself and in its consequences—an idle life. Many arts I have exercised with this view, for which nature never designed me; though among them were some in which I arrived at considerable proficiency, by mere dint of the most heroic perseverance. There is not a squire in all this country who can boast of having made better squirrel-houses, hutches for rabbits, or bird-cages, than myself; and in the article of cabbage nets, I had no superior. I have even had the hardiness to take in hand the pencil, and studied a whole year the art of drawing. Many figures were the fruit of my labours, which had, at least, the merit of being unparalleled by any production either of art or nature. But before the year was ended, I had occasion to wonder at the progress that may be made, in despite of natural deficiency, by dint alone of practice; for I actually produced three landscapes, which a lady thought worthy to be framed and glazed. I then judged it high time to exchange this occupation for another, lest, by any subsequent productions of inferior merit, I should forfeit the honour I had so fortunately acquired. But gardening was, of all employments, that in which I succeeded best; though even in this I did not suddenly attain perfection. I began with lettuces and cauliflowers; from thence I proceeded to cucumbers; next to melons. I then purchased an orange tree, to which, in due time, I added

two or three myrtles. These served me day and night with employment during a whole severe winter. To defend them from the frost, in a situation that exposed them to its severity, cost me much ingenuity and much attendance. I contrived to give them a fire heat; and have waded night after night through the snow, with the bellows under my arm, just before going to bed, to give the latest possible puff to the embers, lest the frost should seize them before morning. Very minute beginnings have sometimes important consequences. From nursing two or three little evergreens, I became ambitious of a greenhouse, and accordingly built one; which, verse excepted, afforded me amusement for a longer time than any expedient of all the many to which I have fled for refuge from the misery of having nothing to do. When I left Olney for Weston, I could no longer have a greenhouse of my own; but in a neighbour's garden I find a better, of which the sole management is consigned to me.

I had need take care, when I begin a letter, that the subject with which I set off be of some importance; for before I can exhaust it, be it what it may, I have generally filled my paper. But self is a subject inexhaustible, which is the reason that though I have said little, and nothing, I am afraid, worth your hearing, I have only room to add, that I am, my dear madam, most truly yours,

W. C.

P. S. Mrs. Unwin bids me present her best compliments, and say how much she shall be

obliged to you for the receipt to make that most excellent cake, which came hither in its native pan. There is no production of yours that will not always be most welcome at Weston.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. TO JOSEPH HILL, ESQ.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

April 15, 1792.

I THANK you for the remittance; which, to use the language of a song much in use when we were boys,—

Adds fresh beauties to the spring,
And makes all nature look more gay.

What the author of the song had particularly in view when he thus sang, I know not; but probably it was not the sum of fifty pounds; which, as probably, he never had the happiness to possess. It was, most probably, some beautiful nymph—beautiful in his eyes, at least,—who has long since become an old woman.

I have heard about my wether mutton from various quarters. First, from a sensible little man (the Rev. John Buchanan), curate of a neighbouring village; then from Walter Bagot; then from Henry Cowper; and now from you. It was a blunder hardly pardonable in a man who has lived amid fields and meadows grazed by sheep, almost these thirty years. I have accordingly satirized myself in two stanzas which I composed last night, while I lay awake, tormented with pain, and well dosed with lauda-

num. If you find them not very brilliant, therefore, you will know how to account for it.—

Cowper had sinned with some excuse,
If, bound in rhyming tethers,
He had committed this abuse
Of changing ewes for wethers ;
But, male for female is a trope,
Or rather bold misnomer,
That would have startled even Pope,
When he translated Homer.

Having translated all the Latin and Italian Miltonics, I was proceeding merrily with a Commentary on the Paradise Lost, when I was seized, a week since, with a most tormenting disorder ; which has qualified me, however, to make some very feeling observations on that passage, when I shall come to it :—

————— Ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam !

And you may thank him, too, that I am not able to fill my sheet, nor endure a writing posture any longer. I conclude abruptly, therefore ; but sincerely subscribing myself, with my best compliments to Mrs. Hill, your affectionate

W. C.

SIR GEORGE SAVILE TO T. B. BAYLEY, ESQ.

SIR,

Liverpool, Nov. 19th, 1779.

I RETURN you the sermon with thanks. It has entertained and pleased me much. I am inclined to think the political part of it more consistently treated throughout than the religious. The ques-

tion of obedience to unlawful commands is soundly laid down, and subject only to that sort of difficulty which all political propositions are liable to from the possibility of being overstrained, and of putting cases which shall drive you to absurd conclusions, by getting into extremes. Thus it will be objected, "Shall each common soldier judge of a nice point of law?" Nevertheless, the doctrine is right and sound.

But I do not so well like the application of Christian virtue to enable a nation "to darken the Roman splendour and to conquer and bless the world." I take conquering to bless, and cutting one half of a nation's throats, to treat the other with lenity, to be the most unchristian thing in the world. Indeed, I have always thought *parcere subjectis* to be a very foolish, as well as a very impertinent saucy language for man to talk to his fellow creatures. I do not know whether I should add to the force of my argument, by saying, likewise, fellow Christians, because I conceive the great point of the Christian religion was to teach us we are fellow creatures.

But, indeed, where is the good of it? Why can't one as well spare people first? I am sure one may spare more of them, and with far less trouble. To talk of "conquering people," and of "the divine principles of free government," in the same page (nay, within four lines) makes one sick.

To know whether conquering (under the saucy pretence of blessing) is good, only ask how you would like for France, or Spain, or the Turk, if

you please, to talk so to us? They would all bless you their own way; some with circumcision, some with the inquisition. And to know whether it is Christian, so to do to others as you would not be done to, is settled, as I remember, somewhere or other; so I need not argue it.

Saving the few lines, p. 10, which the above refers to, I like the sermon well; but that cursed habit, imbibed very early, of applauding successful generous highwaymen, leads one into terrible scrapes when one sets about to manufacture such a warp with a Christian weft. Charles the Twelfth must have been a devilish good Christian. What pity your Alexanders, &c. had not the same advantages! I think a Roman general had not the greater triumph, unless he had slain a certain number of men. To darken their splendour, I suppose the number must have been increased for a clever Christian triumph.

And now having, I think, almost writ a sermon likewise, I thank you once more, and remain, sir, your obliged and obedient humble servant,

G. SAVILE.

ELEGANT EXTRACTS

FROM THE MOST EMINENT
PROSE WRITERS.

PART XII.

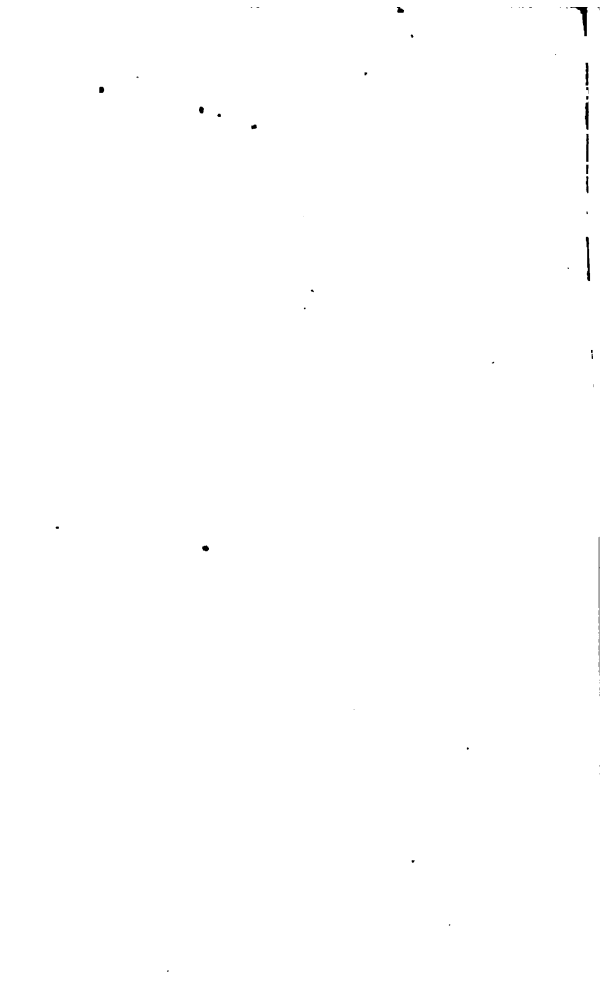
LETTERS.



My old friend and handmaid Betty, perceiving me in motion, got her hip under the strong-box. p. 302.

Chiswick :
PRINTED BY AND FOR C. WHITTINGHAM,
COLLEGE HOUSE.

1827.



ELEGANT EXTRACTS.

PART XII.

Letters,

OF THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE
MONTAGU, ESQ.

DEAR GEORGE, Arlington Street, June 25, 1745.

I HAVE been near three weeks in Essex at Mr. Rigby's, and had left your direction behind me, and could not write to you. 'Tis the charmingest place by nature, and the most trumpery by art that ever I saw. The house stands on a high hill, on an arm of the sea, which winds itself before two sides of the house. On the right and left, at the very foot of this hill lie two towns; the one of market quality, and the other with a wharf where ships come up. This last was to have a church, but by a lucky want of religion in the inhabitants, who would not contribute to building a steeple, it remains an absolute antique temple, with a portico on the very strand. 'Cross this

arm of the sea you see six churches, and charming woody hills in Suffolk. All this parent nature did for this place; but its godfathers and godmothers, I believe, promised it should renounce all the pomps and vanities of this world, for they have patched up a square house, full of windows, low rooms, and thin walls; piled up walls wherever there was a glimpse of prospect; planted avenues that go no where, and dug fish ponds where there should be avenues. We had very bad weather the whole time I was there, but however I rode about and sailed, not having the same apprehensions of catching cold that Mrs. Nerwood had once at Chelsea, when I persuaded her not to go home by water, because it would be damp after rain.

The town is not quite empty yet. My lady Fitzwalter, lady Betty Germain, lady Granville, and the dowager Strafford have their at-homes, and amass company. Lady B——n has done with her Sundays, for she is changing her house into Upper Brook Street. In the meantime she goes to Knightsbridge, and Sir Robert to the woman he keeps at Scarborough. Winnington goes on with the Frasi, so my lady T—— is obliged only to lie of people. You have heard of the disgrace of the Archibald; and that in future scandal she must only be ranked with the lady Elizabeth L——y and madam Lucy W——rs, instead of being historically noble among the Clevelands, Portsmouths, and Yarmouths. 'Tis said Miss Granville has the reversion of her coronet; others say, she won't accept the patent.

Your friend Jemmy L——y,—I beg pardon,

I mean your kin, is not! I am sure he is not your friend;—well, he has had an assembly, and he would write all the cards himself, and every one of them was to desire *he's* company and *she's* company, with other curious pieces of orthography. Adieu, dear George; I wish you a merry farm, as the children say at Vauxhall. My compliments to your sisters. Yours ever.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE
MONTAGU, ESQ.

DEAR GEORGE, Arlington Street, July 13, 1745.
WE are all *Cabob'd* and *Caeofogoed*, as my Lord D——h says. We who formerly; you know, could any one of us beat three Frenchmen, are now so degenerated that three Frenchmen can evidently beat one Englishman. Our army is running away, all that is left to run, for half of it is picked up by three or four hundred at a time. In short, we must step out of the high pantoufles that were made by those cunning shoemakers at Poitiers and Ramillies, and go clumping about, perhaps, in wooden ones. My lady Hervey, who you know dotes upon every thing French, is charmed with the hope of these new shoes, and has already bespoke herself a pair of pigeon wood. How did the tapestry at Blenheim look? Did it glow with victory, or did all our glories look overcast?

I remember a very admired sentence in one of my lord Chesterfield's speeches, when he was

haranguing for this war ; with a most rhetorical transition, he turned to the tapestry in the House of Lords, and said, with a sigh, he feared there were no historical looms at work now ! Indeed, we have reason to bless the good patriots, who have been for employing our manufacturers so historically. The countess of that wise earl, with whose two expressive words I began this letter, says, she is very happy now that my lord had never a place upon the coalition, for then all this bad situation of our affairs would have been laid upon him.

Now I have been talking of remarkable periods in our annals, I must tell you what my lord Baltimore thinks one. He said to the prince t'other day, " Sir, your royal highness's marriage will be an *area* in English history."

If it were not for the life that is put into the town now and then by very bad news from abroad, one should be quite stupified. There is nobody left but two or three solitary regents, and they are always whisking backwards and forwards to their villas ; and about a dozen antediluvian dowagers, whose carcasses have miraculously resisted the wet, and who every Saturday compose a very reverend catacomb at my old lady Stafford's. She does not take money at the door for showing them, but you pay twelve pence a piece under the denomination of card money. Wit and beauty indeed remain in the persons of Lady Townshend and Lady Caroline Fitzroy ; but such is the want of taste of this age, that the former is very often forced to wrap up her wit in plain

English before it can be understood; and the latter is almost as often obliged to have recourse to the same artifices to make her charms be taken notice of.

Of beauty I can tell you an admirable story: one Mrs. Comyns, an elderly gentlewoman, has lately taken a house in St. James's Street; some young gentlemen went there t'other night.—'Well, Mrs. Comyns, I hope there won't be the same disturbances here that there were at your other house in Air Street.'—'Lord, sir, I never had any disturbances there; mine was as quiet a house as any in the neighbourhood, and a great deal of good company came to me: it was only the ladies of quality that envied me.'—'Envied you! why, your house was pulled down about your ears.'—'O dear, sir! don't you know how that happened?'—'No; pray how?'—'Why, dear sir, it was my lady —, who gave ten guineas to the mob to demolish my house, because her ladyship fancied I got women for Colonel C——y.'

My dear George, don't you delight in this story? If poor Harry comes back from Flanders, I intend to have infinite fun with his prudery about this anecdote, which is full as good as if it was true. I beg you will visit Mrs. Comyns when you come to town; she has infinite humour. Adieu, dear George, yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO THE RIGHT
HON. W. PITT.

SIR,

Nov. 19, 1759.

ON my coming to town I did myself the honour of waiting on you and Lady Hester Pitt, and though I think myself extremely distinguished by your obliging note, I should be sorry to have given you the trouble of writing it, if it did not lend me a very pardonable opportunity of saying what I much wished to express, but thought myself too private a person, and of too little consequence, to take the liberty to say. In short, sir, I was eager to congratulate you on the lustre you have thrown on this country; I wished to thank you for the security you have fixed to me of enjoying the happiness I do enjoy. You have placed England in a situation in which it never saw itself,—a task the more difficult, as you had not to improve but to recover. In a trifling book, written two or three years ago, I said (speaking of the name in the world the most venerable to me), “sixteen unfortunate and inglorious years, since his removal, have already written his eulogium.” It is but justice to you, sir, to add, that that period ended when your administration began. Sir, don’t take this for flattery; there is nothing in your power to give that I would accept,—nay, there is nothing I could envy, but what I believe you would scarce offer me—your glory. This may sound very vain and insolent, but consider, sir, what a monarch is a man who wants nothing; consider how he looks down on one who is only the most illustri-

ous man in Britain." But, sir, freedoms apart, insignificant as I am, probably it must be some satisfaction to a great mind like yours, to receive incense when you are sure there is no flattery blended with it: and what must any Englishman be that could give you a minute's satisfaction, and would hesitate!

Adieu, sir,—I am unambitious, I am disinterested—but I am vain. You have by your notice, uncanvassed, unexpected, and at the period when you certainly could have the least temptation to stoop down to me, flattered me in the most agreeable manner. If there could arrive a moment, when you could be nobody, and I any body, you cannot imagine how grateful I would be. In the mean time permit me to be, as I have been ever since I had the honour of knowing you, sir, your obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE
MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, November 13, 1760.

EVEN the honeymoon of a new reign don't produce events every day. There is nothing but the common saying of addresses and kissing hands. The chief difficulty is settled; Lord George yields the mastership of the horse to Lord Huntingdon, and removes to the great wardrobe, from whence Sir Thomas Robinson was to have gone into Ellis's place, but he is saved. The city, however, have a mind to be out of humour; a paper

has been fixed on the Royal Exchange, with these words, "No petticoat government, no Scotch minister, no Lord George Sackville:" two hints totally unfounded, and the other scarce true.—No petticoat ever governed less,—it is left at Leicester House; Lord George's breeches are as little concerned; and except Lady Susan Stuart, and Sir Harry Erskine, nothing has yet been done for any Scots. For the king himself, he seems all good nature, and wishing to satisfy every body; all his speeches are obliging. I saw him again yesterday, and was surprised to find the levee-room had lost so entirely the air of the lion's den. This sovereign don't stand in one spot, with his eyes fixed royally on the ground, and dropping bits of German news; he walks about and speaks to every body. I saw him afterwards on the throne, where he is graceful and genteel, sits with dignity, and reads his answers to addresses well: it was the Cambridge address, carried by the Duke of Newcastle in his doctor's gown, and looking like the *medecin malgré lui*. He had been vehemently solicitous for attendance, for fear my lord Westmoreland, who vouchsafes himself to bring the address from Oxford, should outnumber him. Lord Litchfield and several other jacobites have kissed hands: George Selwyn says, "they go to St. James's, because now there are so many Stuarts there."

Do you know I had the curiosity to go to the burying to other night. I had never seen a royal funeral; nay, I walked as a rag of quality, which I found would be, and so it was, the easiest way of seeing it. It is absolutely a noble sight.

The prince's chamber, hung with purple, and a quantity of silver lamps, the coffin under a canopy of purple velvet, and six vast chandeliers of silver on high stands, had a very good effect. The ambassador from Tripoli and his son were carried to see that chamber. The procession through a line of foot guards, every seventh man bearing a torch, the horse guards lining the outside, their officers with drawn sabres and crape sashes on horseback, the drums muffled, the fifes, bells tolling, and minute guns,—all this was very solemn. But the charm was the entrance of the abbey, where we were received by the dean and chapter in rich robes, the choir and almsmen bearing torches, the whole abbey so illuminated, that one saw it to greater advantage than by day; the tombs, long aisles, and fretted roof all appeared distinctly and with the happiest *chiara scuro*.—There wanted nothing but incense, and little chapels here and there, with priests saying mass for the repose of the defunct,—yet one could not complain of its not being catholic enough. I had been in dread of being coupled with some boy of ten years old; but the heralds were not very accurate, and I walked with George Grenville, taller and older, to keep me in countenance. When we came to the chapel of Henry the Seventh, all solemnity and decorum ceased,—no order was observed, people sat or stood where they could or would; the yeomen of the guard were crying out for help, oppressed by the immense weight of the coffin; the bishop read sadly, and blundered in the prayers; the fine chapter, *Man that is born of a woman*, was chanted, not

read ; and the anthem, besides being immeasurably tedious, would have served as well for a nuptial. The real serious part was the figure of the Duke of Cumberland, heightened by a thousand melancholy circumstances. He had a dark brown adonis, and a cloak of black cloth, with a train of five yards. Attending the funeral of a father could not be pleasant ; his leg extremely bad, yet forced to stand upon it near two hours ; his face bloated and distorted with his late paralytic stroke, which affected too one of his eyes, and placed over the mouth of the vault, into which, in all probability, he must himself so soon descend,—think how unpleasant a situation !—He bore it all with a firm and unaffected countenance. This grave scene was fully contrasted by the burlesque Duke of Newcastle. He fell into a fit of crying the moment he came into the chapel, and flung himself back in a stall, the archbishop hovering over him with a smelling-bottle : but in two minutes his curiosity got the better of his hypocrisy, and he ran about the chapel with his glass, to spy who was or was not there, spying with one hand and mopping his eyes with the other. Then returned the fear of catching cold ; and the Duke of Cumberland, who was sinking with heat, felt himself weighed down, and turning round found it was the Duke of Newcastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of the marble. It was very theatric to look down into the vault, where the coffin lay, attended by mourners with lights. Clavering, the groom of the bedchamber, refused to sit up with the body, and was dismissed by the king's order.

I have nothing more to tell you but a trifle—a very trifle. The king of Prussia has totally defeated marshal Daun. This, which would have been prodigious news a month ago is nothing to-day; it only takes its turn among the questions, “Who is to be groom of the bedchamber? What is Sir T. Robinson to have?” I have been to Leicester Fields to-day; the crowd was immoderate; I don’t believe it will continue so.—Good night. Yours ever.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE
MONTAGU, ESQ.

Houghton, March 25, 1761.

HERE I am at Houghton, and alone! in this spot, where (except two hours last month) I have not been in sixteen years! Think what a crowd of reflections! No, Gray and forty churchyards could not furnish so many; nay, I know one must feel them with greater indifference than I possess, to have patience to put them into verse. Here I am, probably for the last time of my life, though not for the last time: every clock that strikes tells me I am an hour nearer to yonder church—that church, into which I have not yet had courage to enter, where lies that mother on whom I doted, and who doted on me! There are the two rival mistresses of Houghton, neither of whom ever wished to enjoy it! There, too, lies he who founded its greatness; to contribute

to whose fall Europe was embroiled ; there he sleeps, in quiet and dignity, while his friend and his foe, rather his false ally and real enemy—Newcastle and Bath, are exhausting the dregs of their pitiful lives in squabbles and pamphlets.

The surprise the pictures gave me is again renewed ; accustomed for many years to see nothing but wretched daubs and varnished copies at auctions, I look at these as enchantment. My own description of them seems poor ; but shall I tell you truly, the majesty of Italian ideas almost shrinks before the warm nature of Flemish colouring. Alas ! don't I grow old ? My young imagination was fired with Guido's ideas ; must they be plump and prominent as Abishag to warm me now ? Does great youth feel with poetic limbs, as well as see with poetic eyes ? In one respect I am very young, I cannot satiate myself with looking : an incident contributed to make me feel this more strongly. A party arrived just as I did, to see the house, a man and three women in riding-dresses, and they rode post through the apartments. I could not hurry before them fast enough ; they were not so long in seeing for the first time, as I could have been in one room, to examine what I knew by heart. I remember formerly being often diverted with this kind of *seers* ; they come, ask what such a room is called, in which Sir Robert lay, write it down, admire a lobster or a cabbage in a marketplace, dispute whether the last room was green or purple, and then hurry to the inn for fear the fish should be over dressed. How different my sensations ! not

a picture here but recalls a history ; not one, but I remember in Downing Street or Chelsea, where queens and crowds admire them, though seeing them as little as these travellers !

When I had drunk tea, I strolled into the garden ; they told me it was now called the pleasure ground. What a dissonant idea of pleasure ! those groves, those *allées*, where I have passed so many charming moments, are now stripped up or overgrown—many fond paths I could not unravel, though with a very exact clue in my memory : I met two gamekeepers and a thousand hares ! In the days when all my soul was tuned to pleasure and vivacity (and you will think, perhaps, it is far from being out of tune yet), I hated Houghton ; Houghton, I knew not what to call it, a monument of grandeur or ruin ! How I have wished this evening for Lord Bute ; how I could preach to him ! For myself, I do not want to be preached to ; I have long considered how every Balbec must wait for the chance of a Mr. Wood. The servants wanted to lay me in the great apartment,—what, to make me pass my night as I have done my evening ! It were like proposing to Margaret Roper to be a duchess in the court that cut off her father's head, and imagining it would please her. I have chosen to sit in my father's little dressingroom, and am now by his *scrutoire*, where, in the height of his fortune, he used to receive the accounts of his farmers, and deceive himself, or us, with the thoughts of his economy. How wise a man at once, and how weak ! For what has he built

Houghton? For his grandson to annihilate, or for his son to mourn over? If Lord Burleigh could rise and view his representative driving the Hatfield stage, he would feel as I feel now. Poor little Strawberry! at least it will not be stripped to pieces by a descendant! You will find all these fine meditations dictated by pride, not by philosophy. Pray consider through how many mediums philosophy must pass, before it is purified,—

How often must it weep, how often burn.

My mind was extremely prepared for all this gloom, by parting with Mr. Conway yesterday morning: moral reflections or common places are the livery one likes to wear, when one has just had a real misfortune. He is going to Germany: I was glad to dress myself up in transitory Houghton, in lieu of very sensible concern. To-morrow I shall be distracted with thoughts, at least images of very different complexion. I go to Lynn, and am to be elected on Friday. I shall return hither on Saturday, again alone, to expect Burleighides on Sunday, whom I left at Newmarket. I must once in my life see him on his grandfather's throne.

Epping, Monday night, thirty-first.

No, I have not seen him; he loitered on the road, and I was kept at Lynn till yesterday morning. It is plain I never knew for how many trades I was formed, when at this time of the day I can begin electioneering, and succeed in my

new vocation. Think of me, the subject of a mob, who was scarce ever before in a mob, addressing them in the town-hall, riding at the head of two thousand people through such a town as Lynn, dining with above two hundred of them, amid bumpers, huzzas, songs, and tobacco, and finishing with country dancing at a ball and sixpenny whisk! I have borne it all cheerfully; nay, have sat hours in *conversation*, the thing upon earth that I hate, have been to hear misses play on the harpsicord, and to see an alderman's copies of Rubens and Carlo Marat. Yet to do the folks justice, they are sensible, and reasonable, and civilized; their very language is polished since I lived among them. I attribute this to their more frequent intercourse with the world and the capital, by the help of good roads and post-chaises, which, if they have abridged the king's dominions, have at least tamed his subjects.—Well, how comfortable it will be to-morrow, to see my paroquet,—to play at loo, and not to be obliged to talk seriously! The Heraclitus of the beginning of this letter will be overjoyed on finishing it to sign himself your old friend,

DEMOCRITUS.

P.S.—I forgot to tell you, that my ancient aunt Hammond came over to Lynn to see me,—not from any affection, but curiosity. The first thing she said to me, though we have not met these sixteen years, was, “Child, you have done a thing to-day, that your father never did in all his life; you sat as they carried you, he always stood the whole time.”—“Madam,” said I,

“when I am placed in a chair, I conclude I am to sit in it; besides, as I cannot imitate my father in great things, I am not at all ambitious of mimicking him in little ones.” I am sure she proposes to tell her remarks to my uncle Horace’s ghost, the instant they meet.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE
MONTAGU, ESQ.

Arlington Street, Dec. 16, 1764.

As I have not read in the papers that you died lately at Greatworth, in Northamptonshire, nor have met with any Montagu or Trevor in mourning, I conclude you are living: I send this, however, to inquire, and if you should happen to be departed, hope your executor will be so kind as to burn it. Though you do not seem to have the same curiosity about my existence, you may gather from my handwriting that I am still in being; which being perhaps full as much as you want to know of me, I will trouble you with no farther particulars about myself,—nay, nor about any body else; your curiosity seeming to be pretty much the same about all the world. News there are certainly none; nobody is even dead, as the bishop of Carlisle told me to-day, which I repeat to you in general, though I apprehend in his own mind he meant no possessor of a better bishopric.

If you like to know the state of the town, here it is:—In the first place, it is very empty; in the

next, there are more diversions than the week will hold. A charming Italian opera, with no dances and no company, at least on Tuesdays, to supply which defect, the subscribers are to have a ball and supper; a plan that, in my humble opinion, will fill the Tuesdays and empty the Saturdays. At both playhouses are woful English operas, which however fill better than the Italian, patriotism being entirely confined to our ears; how long the sages of the law may leave us those I cannot say. Mrs. Cornelis, apprehending the future assembly at Almack's, has enlarged her vast room, and hung it with blue satin, and another with yellow satin, but Almack's room, which is to be ninety feet long, proposes to swallow up both hers, as easily as Moses's rod gobbled down those of the magicians.— Well; but there are more joys, a dinner and assembly every Tuesday at the Austrian minister's; ditto on Thursdays at the Spaniard's; ditto on Wednesdays and Sundays at the French ambassador's; besides Madame de Welderen's on Wednesday, Lady Harrington's Sundays, and occasional private mobs at my Lady Northumberland's. Then for the mornings, there are levees and drawingrooms without end. Not to mention the Macaroni club, which has quite absorbed Arthur's; for you know old fools will hobble after young ones. Of all these pleasures, I prescribe myself a very small pittance, my dark corner in my own box at the opera, and now and then an ambassador; to keep my French going till my journey to Paris. Politics are gone to sleep, like a peroli at Pharaoh, though there is the finest

tract published that ever was written, called an Inquiry into the Doctrine of Abels. It would warm your old Algernon blood ; but for what any body cares, might as well have been written about the wars of York and Lancaster. The thing most in fashion is my edition of Lord Herbert's life ; people are mad after it, I believe because only two hundred were printed ; and by the numbers that admire it, I am convinced that if I had kept his lordship's counsel, very few would have found out the absurdity of it. The caution with which I hinted at its extravagance, has passed with several for approbation, and drawn on theirs. This is nothing new to me ; it is when one laughs out at their idols that one angers people. I do not wonder now that Sir Philip Sidney was the darling hero, when Lord Herbert, who followed him so close and trod in his steps, is at this time of day within an ace of rivalling him. I wish I had let him ; it was contradicting one of my own maxims, which I hold to be very just ; that it is idle to endeavour to cure the world of any folly, unless we could cure it of being foolish.

Tell me whether I am likely to see you before I go to Paris, which will be early in February. I hate you for being so indifferent about me. I live in the world, and yet love nothing ; care a straw for nothing, but two or three old friends, that I have loved these thirty years. You have buried yourself with half a dozen parsons and squires, and yet never cast a thought upon those you have always lived with. You come to town for two months, grow tired in six weeks, hurry away, and then one hears no more of you till next

winter. I don't want you to like the world, I like it no more than you ; but I stay awhile in it, because while one sees it one laughs at it, but when one gives it up one grows angry with it ; and I hold it much wiser to laugh than to be out of humour. You cannot imagine how much ill blood this perseverance has cured me of ; I used to say to myself, " Lord ! this person is so bad, that person is so bad, I hate them." I have now found out that they are all pretty much alike, and I hate nobody. Having never found you out, but for integrity and sincerity, I am much disposed to persist in a friendship with you ; but if I am to be at all the pains of keeping it up, I shall imitate my neighbours (I don't mean those at next door, but in the Scripture sense of a neighbour, any body), and say, " that is a very good man, but I don't care a farthing for him." Till I have taken my final resolution on that head, I am, yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO GEORGE
MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1765.

THE less one is disposed, if one has any sense, to talk of one's self to people that inquire only out of compliment, and do not listen to the answer, the more satisfaction one feels in indulging a self complacency, by sighing to those that really sympathize with our griefs. Do not think it is pain that makes me give this low-spirited air to

my letter. No, it is the prospect of what is to come, not the sensation of what is passing, that affects me. The loss of youth is melancholy enough ; but to enter into old age through the gate of infirmity, most disheartening. My health and spirits made me take but slight notice of the transition, and under the persuasion of temperance being a talisman, I marched boldly on towards the descent of the hill, knowing that I must fall at last, but not suspecting that I should stumble by the way. This confession explains the mortification I feel. A month's confinement to one, who never kept his bed a day, is a stinging lesson, and has humbled my insolence to almost indifference. Judge then how little I interest myself about public events. I know nothing of them since I came hither, where I had not only the disappointment of not growing better, but a bad return in one of my feet, so that I am still wrapped up and upon a couch. It was the more unlucky, as Lord Hertford is come to England for a very few days. He has offered to come to me, but as I then should see him only for some minutes, I purpose being carried to town to-morrow. It will be so long before I can expect to be able to travel, that my French journey will certainly not take place so soon as I intended ; and if Lord Hertford goes to Ireland, I shall be still more fluctuating ; for though the duke and duchess of Richmond will replace them at Paris, and are as eager to have me with them, I have had so many years heaped upon me within this month, that I have not the conscience to trouble young people, when I can no longer be

as juvenile as they are. Indeed I shall think myself decrepit, till I can again saunter into the garden, in my slippers, and without my hat, in all weathers, a point I am determined to regain if possible, for even this experience cannot make me resign my temperance and my hardiness. I am tired of the world, its politics, its pursuits, and its pleasures, but it will cost me some struggles before I submit to be tender and careful. Christ! can I ever stoop to the regimen of old age? I do not wish to dress up a withered person, nor drag it about to public places; but to sit in one's room, clothed warmly, expecting visits from folks I don't wish to see, and tended and flattered by relations impatient for one's death! let the gout do its worst as expeditiously as it can; it would be more welcome in my stomach than in my limbs. I am not made to bear a course of nonsense and advice, but must play the fool in my own way to the last; alone, with all my heart, if I cannot be with the very few I wish to see; but to depend for comfort on others, who would be no comfort to me, this surely is not a state to be preferred to death, and nobody can have truly enjoyed the advantages of youth, health, and spirits, who is content to exist without the two last, which alone bear any resemblance to the first.

You see how difficult it is to conquer my proud spirit: low and weak as I am, I think my resolution and perseverance will get the better, and that I shall still be a gay shadow; at least, I will impose any severity upon myself, rather than humour the gout, and sink into that indulgence

with which most people treat it. Bodily liberty is as dear to me as mental, and I would as soon flatter any other tyrant as the gout, my whiggism extending as much to my health as to my principles, and being as willing to part with life, when I cannot preserve it, as your uncle Algernon when his freedom was at stake. Adieu ; yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO MR. GRAY.

Paris, Jan. 25, 1766.

I AM much indebted to you for your kind letter and advice ; and though it is late to thank you for it, it is at least a stronger proof that I do not forget it. However, I am a little obstinate, as you know, on the chapter of health, and have persisted, through this Siberian winter, in not adding a grain to my clothes, and in going open-breasted, without an under waistcoat. In short, though I like extremely to live, it must be in my own way, as long as I can : it is not youth I court, but liberty ; and I think making one's self tender is issuing a *general warrant* against one's own person. I suppose I shall submit to confinement when I cannot help it ; but I am indifferent enough to life not to care if it ends soon after my prison begins.

I have not delayed so long to answer your letter from not thinking of it, or from want of matter, but from want of time. I am constantly occupied, engaged, amused, till I cannot bring a

hundredth part of what I have to say into the compass of a letter. You will lose nothing by this : you know my volubility, when I am full of new subjects ; and I have at least many hours of conversation for you at my return. One does not learn a whole nation in four or five months ; but, for the time, few, I believe, have seen, studied, or got so much acquainted with the French as I have.

By what I said of their religious, or rather irreligious opinions, you must not conclude their people of quality atheists—at least not the men. Happily for them, poor souls ! they are not capable of going so far into thinking. They assent to a great deal, because it is the fashion, and because they don't know how to contradict. They are ashamed to defend the Roman Catholic religion, because it is quite exploded ; but I am convinced they believe it in their hearts. They hate the parliaments and the philosophers, and are rejoiced that they may still idolize royalty. At present, too, they are a little triumphant : the court has shown a little spirit, and the parliaments much less : but as the duc de Choiseul, who is very fluttering, unsettled, and inclined to the philosophers, has made a compromise with the parliament of Bretagne, the parliaments might venture out again, if, as I fancy will be the case, they are not glad to drop a cause, of which they began to be a little weary of the inconveniences.

The generality of the men, and more than the generality, are dull and empty. They have taken up gravity, thinking it was philosophy and English, and so have acquired nothing in the

room of their natural levity and cheerfulness. However, as their high opinion of their own country remains, for which they can no longer assign any reason, they are contemptuous and reserved, instead of being ridiculously, consequently pardonably, impertinent. I have wondered, knowing my own countrymen, that we had attained such a superiority. I wonder no longer, and have a little more respect for English heads than I had.

The women do not seem of the same country : if they are less gay than they were, they are more informed, enough to make them very conversable. I know six or seven with very superior understandings ; some of them with wit, or with softness, or very good sense.

Madam Geoffrin, of whom you have heard much, is an extraordinary woman, with more common sense than I almost ever met with. Great quickness in discovering characters, penetration in going to the bottom of them, and a pencil that never fails in a likeness—seldom a favourable one. She exacts and preserves, spite of her birth and their nonsensical prejudices about nobility, great court and attention. This she acquires by a thousand little arts and offices of friendship ; and by a freedom and severity, which seems to be her sole end of drawing a concourse to her ; for she insists on scolding those she inveigles to her. She has little taste and less knowledge, but protects artisans and authors, and courts a few people to have the credit of serving her dependants. She was bred under the famous Madam Tencier, who advised her never to refuse

any man ; for, said her mistress, though nine in ten should not care a farthing for you, the tenth may live to be a useful friend. She did not adopt or reject the whole plan, but fully retained the purport of the maxim. In short, she is an epitome of empire, subsisting by rewards and punishments. Her great enemy, Madam du Defand, was for a short time mistress of the regent, is now very old and stone blind, but retains all her vivacity, wit, memory, judgment, passions, and agreeableness. She goes to operas, plays, suppers, and Versailles ; gives suppers twice a week ; has every thing new read to her ; makes new songs and epigrams, ay, admirably, and remembers every one that has been made these fourscore years. She corresponds with Voltaire, dictates charming letters to him, contradicts him, is no bigot to him or any body, and laughs both at the clergy and the philosophers. In a dispute, into which she easily falls, she is very warm, and yet scarcely ever in the wrong : her judgment on every subject is as just as possible, on every point of conduct as wrong as possible ; for she is all love and hatred ; passionate for her friends to enthusiasm, still anxious to be loved (I don't mean by lovers), and a vehement enemy, but openly. As she can have no amusement but conversation, the least solitude and ennui are insupportable to her, and put her into the power of several worthless people, who eat her suppers when they can eat nobody's of higher rank ; wink to one another, and laugh at her ; hate her because she has forty times more parts—and venture to hate her because she is not rich. She

has an old friend, whom I must mention, a Monsieur Pondeville, author of the *Fat Puni*, and the *Complaisant*, and of those pretty novels the *Comte de Cominge*, the *Siege of Calais*, and *Les Malheurs de l'Amour*. Would not you expect this old man to be very agreeable? He can be so, but seldom is: yet he has another very different and very amusing talent, the art of parody, and is unique in his kind. He composes tales to the tunes of long dances: for instance, he has adapted the Regent's *Daphnis and Chloë* to one, and made it ten times more indecent; but is so old, and sings it so well, that it is permitted in all companies. He has succeeded still better in *les caractères de la duncce*, to which he has adapted words that express all the characters of love. With all this, he has not the least idea of cheerfulness in conversation: seldom speaks but on grave subjects, and not often on them; is a humourist, very supercilious, and wrapt up in admiration of his own country, as the only judge of his merit. His air and look are cold and forbidding; but ask him to sing, or praise his works, his eyes and smiles open and brighten up. In short, I can show him to you: the self-applauding poet in Hogarth's *Rake's Progress*, the second print, is so like his very features and very wig, that you would know him by it, if you came hither—for he certainly will not go to you.

Madame de Mirepoix's understanding is excellent of the useful kind, and can be so, when she pleases, of the agreeable kind. She has read, but seldom shows it, and has perfect taste. Her manner is cold, but very civil; and she conceals

even the blood of Lorrain, without ever forgetting it. Nobody in France knows the world better, and nobody is personally so well with the king. She is false, artful, and insinuating beyond measure, when it is to her interest, but indolent and a coward. She never had any passion but gaming, and always loses. For ever paying court, the sole produce of a life of art is to get money from the king to carry on a course of paying debts, or contracting new ones, which she discharges as fast as she is able. She advertised devotion to get made *dame du palais* to the queen; and the very next day this princess of Lorrain was seen riding backwards with Madame Pompadour in the latter's coach. When the king was stabbed and heartily frightened, the mistress took a panic too, and consulted d'Argenson, whether she had not best make off in time. He hated her, and said, "By all means." Madame de Mirepoix advised her to stay. The king recovered his spirits, d'Argenson was banished, and la marechale inherited part of the mistress's credit.—I must interrupt my history of illustrious women with an anecdote of Monsieur de Maurepas, with whom I am much acquainted, and who has one of the few heads that approach to good ones, and who, luckily for us, was disgraced, and the marine dropped, because it was his favourite object and province. He employed Pondeville to make a song on the Pompadour: it was clever and bitter, and did not spare even majesty. This was Maurepas absurd enough to sing at supper at Versailles. Banishment ensued; and, lest he should ever be restored, the mistress persuaded

the king that he had poisoned her predecessor, Madame de Chateauroux. Maurepas is very agreeable, and exceedingly cheerful; yet I have seen a transient silent cloud when politics are talked of.

Madame de Boufflers, who was in England, is a *savante*, mistress of the prince of Conti, and very desirous of being his wife. She is two women, the upper and the lower. I need not tell you that the lower is gallant, and still has pretensions. The upper is very sensible too, and has a measured eloquence that is just and pleasing; but all is spoiled by an unrelaxed attention to applause. You would think she was always sitting for her picture to her biographer.

Madame de Rochfort is different from all the rest. Her understanding is just and delicate; with a finesse of wit, that is the result of reflection. Her manner is soft and feminine, and, though a *savante*, without any declared pretensions. She is the *decent* friend of Monsieur de Nivernois, for you must not believe a syllable of what you read in their novels * * * * *.

The Duc de Nivernois has parts, and writes at the top of the mediocre; but, as Madame Geoffrin says, is *manqué partout*; *guerrier manqué*, *ambassadeur manqué*, *homme d'affaires manqué*, and *auteur manqué*—no, he is not *homme de naissance manqué*. He would think freely, but has some ambition of being governor to the dauphin, and is more afraid of his wife and daughter, who are ecclesiastic fagots. The former outchatters the duke of Newcastle; and the latter, Madame de Gisors, exhausts Mr. Pitt's eloquence in defence of the

archbishop of Paris. Monsieur de Nivernois lives in a small circle of dependant admirers, and Madame de Rochfort is high priestess for a small salary of credit.

The duchess of Choiseul, the only young one of these heroines, is not very pretty, but has fine eyes, and is a little model in waxwork, which not being allowed to speak for some time as incapable, has a hesitation and modesty, the latter of which the court has not cured, and the former of which is atoned for by the most interesting sound of voice, and forgotten in the most elegant turn and propriety of expression. Oh ! it is the gentlest, most amiable, civil, little creature that ever came out of a fairy egg ! So just in its phrases and thoughts, so attentive and good natured ! Every body loves it but its husband, who prefers her own sister, the Duchesse de Grammont, an Amazonian, fierce, haughty dame, who loves and hates arbitrarily, and is detested. Madame de Choiseul, passionately fond of her husband, was the martyr of this union, but at last submitted with a good grace ; has gained a little credit with him, and is still believed to idolize him. But I doubt it—she takes too much pains to profess it.

I cannot finish my list without adding a much more common character, but more complete in its kind than any of the foregoing, the Marechale de Luxembourg. She has been very handsome, very abandoned, and very mischievous. Her beauty is gone, her lovers are gone, and she thinks the devil is coming. This dejection has softened her into being rather agreeable, for she

has wit and good breeding; but you would swear, by the restlessness of her person, and the horrors she cannot conceal, that she had signed the compact, and expected to be called upon in a week for the performance.

I could add many pictures, but none so remarkable. In those I send you, there is not a feature bestowed gratis or exaggerated. For the beauties, of which there are a few considerable, as Mesdames de Brionne, de Monaco, et d'Egmont, they have not yet lost their characters, nor got any.

You must not attribute my intimacy with Paris to curiosity alone. An accident unlocked the doors for me. The *passe partout*, called the fashion, has made them fly open—and what do you think was that fashion? I myself. Yes, like Queen Elinor in the ballad, I sunk at Charing Cross, and have risen in the Fauxbourg St. Germain. A *plaisanterie* on Rousseau, whose arrival here in his way to you brought me acquainted with many anecdotes conformable to the idea I had conceived of him, got about, was liked much more than it deserved, spread like wild fire, and made me the subject of conversation. Rousseau's devotees were offended. Madame de Boufflers, with a tone of sentiment, and the accents of lamenting humanity, abused me heartily, and then complained to myself with the utmost softness. I acted contrition, but had like to have spoiled all, by growing dreadfully tired of a second lecture from the prince of Conti, who took up the ball, and made himself the hero of a history wherein he had nothing to do. I listened,

did not understand half he said (nor he neither), forgot the rest, said yes when I should have said no, yawned when I should have smiled, and was very penitent when I should have rejoiced at my pardon. Madame de Boufflers was more distressed, for he owned twenty times more than I had said: she frowned, and made him signs: but she had wound up his clack, and there was no stopping it. The moment she grew angry, the lord of the house grew charmed, and it has been my fault if I am not at the head of a numerous sect: but when I left a triumphant party in England, I did not come hither to be at the head of a fashion. However, I have been sent for about like an African prince, or a learned Canary bird, and was, in particular, carried by force to the princess of Talmond, the queen's cousin, who lives in a charitable apartment in the Luxembourg, and was sitting on a small bed, hung with saints and Sobieskis, in a corner of one of those vast chambers, by two blinking tapers. I stumbled over a cat, a footstool, and a chamberpot, in my journey to her presence. She could not find a syllable to say to me, and the visit ended with her begging a lapdog. Thank the Lord! though this is the first month, it is the last week of my reign; and I shall resign my crown with great satisfaction to a *bouillie* of chestnuts, which is just invented, and whose annals will be illustrated by so many indigestions, that Paris will not want any thing else these three weeks. I will enclose the fatal letter after I have finished this enormous one; to which I will only add, that nothing has in-

interrupted my Sevigné researches but the frost. The Abbé de Malesherbes has given me full power to ransack Lisry. I did not tell you, that by great accident, when I thought on nothing less, I stumbled on an original picture of the Comte de Grammont. Adieu! You are generally in London in March; I shall be there by the end of it. Yours ever.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO G. MONTAGU, ESQ.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1768.

No, I cannot be so false as to say I am glad you are pleased with your situation. You are so apt to take root, that it requires ten years to dig you out again when you once begin to settle. As you go pitching your tent up and down, I wish you were still more a Tartar, and shifted your quarters perpetually. Yes, I will come and see you; but tell me first, when do your duke and duchess travel to the north. I know he is a very amiable lad, and I do not know that she is not as amiable a *laddess*, but I had rather see their house comfortably when they are not there.

I perceive the deluge fell upon you, before it reached us. It began here but on Monday last, and then rained near eight and forty hours without intermission. My poor hay has not a dry thread to its back. I have had a fire these three days. In short, every summer one lives in a state of

mutiny and murmur, and I have found the reason : it is because we will affect to have a summer, and we have no title to any such thing. Our poets learnt their trade of the Romans, and so adopted the terms of their masters. They talk of shady groves, purling streams, and cooling breezes, and we get sore throats and agues with attempting to realize these visions. Master Damon writes a song, and invites Miss Chloe to enjoy the cool of the evening, and the deuce a bit have we of any such thing as a cool evening. Zephyr is a north east wind, that makes Damon button up to the chin, and pinches Chloe's nose till it is red and blue ; and then they cry, *this is a bad summer*, as if we ever had any other. The best sun we have is made of Newcastle coal, and I am determined never to reckon upon any other. We ruin ourselves with inviting over foreign trees, and make our houses clamber up hills to look at prospects. How our ancestors would laugh at us, who knew there was no being comfortable, unless you had a high hill before your nose, and a thick warm wood at your back ! Taste is too freezing a commodity for us, and, depend upon it, will go out of fashion again.

There is indeed a natural warmth in this country, which, as you say, I am very glad not to enjoy any longer. I mean the hothouse in St. Stephen's Chapel. My own sagacity makes me very vain, though there was very little merit in it. I had seen so much of all parties, that I had little esteem left for any ; it is most indifferent to me who is in or who is out, or which is set in the pillory, Mr. Wilkes or my Lord Mans-

field. I see the country going to ruin, and no man with brains enough to save it. That is mortifying ; but what signifies who has the undoing of it ? I seldom suffer myself to think on the subject : my patriotism could do no good, and my philosophy can make me be at peace.

I am sorry you are likely to lose your poor cousin, Lady Hinchinbrook ; I heard a very bad account of her when I was last in town. Your letter to Madame Roland shall be taken care of ; but as you are so scrupulous of making me pay postage, I must remember not to overcharge you, as I can frank my idle letters no longer ! therefore, good night ! Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

THE HON. H. WALPOLE TO THE REV. W. COLE.

DEAR SIR,

Strawberry Hill, June 26, 1769.

OH ! yes, yes, I shall like Thursday or Friday, 6th or 7th, exceedingly ; I shall like your staying with me two days exceedinglier ; and longer, exceedingliest : and I will carry you back to Cambridge on our pilgrimage to Ely. But I should not at all like to be caught in the glories of an installation, and find myself a doctor before I knew where I was. It will be much more agreeable to find the whole *caput* asleep, digesting turtle, dreaming of bishoprics, and humming old catches of Anacreon, and scraps of Corelli. I wish Mr. Gray may not be set out for the north, which is rather the case than setting out for the summer.

We have no summers, I think, but what we raise, like pine apples, by fire. My hay is absolutely *water soochy*, and teaches me how to feel for you. You are quite in the right to sell your sief in Marshland. I should be glad if you would take one step more, and quit Marshland.

We live at least on terra firma in this part of the world, and can saunter out without stilts. *Item*, we do not wade into pools and call it going upon the water, and get sore throats. I recollect this is not the first you have complained of. Pray be not incorrigible, but come to shore.

Be so good as to thank Mr. Smith, my old tutor, for his corrections. If ever the anecdotes are printed, I will certainly profit of them. I joked, it is true, about Joscelin de Louvain, and his duchess; but not at all in advising you to make Mr. Percy pimp for the plate. On the contrary, I wish you success, and think this an infallible method of obtaining the benefaction. It is right to lay vanity under contribution; for both sides are pleased.

It will not be easy for you to dine with Mr. Granger from hence, and return at night. It cannot be less than six or seven and twenty miles to Shiplate. But I go to Park Place to-morrow (Mr. Henry Conway's), which is within two miles of him, and I will try if I can tempt him to meet you here. Adieu.

THE HON. H. WALPOLE TO THE REV. W. COLE.

Arlington Street, June 11, 1771.

You are very kind, dear sir, and I ought to be; nay, what is more, I am, ashamed of giving you so much trouble; but I am in no hurry for the letters. I shall not set out till the seventh, next month, and it will be sufficient if I receive them a week before I set out. Mr. C. C. C. C. is very welcome to attack me about a duchess of Norfolk. He is even welcome to be in the right, to the edification, I hope, of all the matrons of the Antiquarian Society, who, I trust, will insert his criticisms in the next volume of their *Archæologia*, or *Old Woman's Logic*; but indeed I cannot bestow my time on any more of them, nor employ myself in detecting witches for vomiting pins. When they turn extortioners, like their masters, the law should punish them, not only for roguery, but for exceeding their province, which our ancestors limited to killing their neighbour's cow, or crucifying dolls of wax. For my own part, I am so far from being out of charity with him, that I would give him a nag or a new broom whenever he has a mind to ride to the Antiquarian Sabbat, and preach against me. Though you have more cause to be angry, laugh at him as I do. One has not life enough to throw away on all the fools and knaves that come across one. I have often been attacked, and never replied but to Mr. Hume and Dr. Milles; to the first, because he had a name; to the second, because he had a mind to have one: and yet I was in the

wrong, for it was the only way he could attain one. In truth, it is being too self-interested to expose only one's private antagonists, when one lets worse men pass unnoticed. Does a booby hurt me by an attack on me more than by any other foolish thing he does? Does he not tease me more by any thing he says to me without attacking me, than by any thing he says against me behind my back?

I shall therefore most certainly never inquire after or read Mr. C. C. C. C.'s criticisms, but leave him to oblivion with her grace of Norfolk, and our wise society. As I doubt my own writings will soon be forgotten, I need not fear that those of my answerers will be remembered. I am, dear sir, yours most sincerely.

THE HON. H. WALPOLE TO THE REV. W. COLE.

Arlington Street, Jan. 28, 1772.

MR. MASON has shown me the relics of poor Mr. Gray. I am sadly disappointed at finding them so very inconsiderable. He always persisted, when I inquired about his writings, that he had nothing by him. I own I doubted. I am grieved he was so very near exact. Since given to the world for twelve guineas! Gray valued them as "nothing," and Mason would not publish even a scrap. I speak of my own satisfaction. As to his genius, what he published during his life will establish his fame as long as our language lasts, and there is a man of genius left. There is a silly fellow, I do not

know who, that has published a volume of letters on the English nation, with characters of our modern authors. He has talked such nonsense of Mr. Gray, that I have no patience with the compliments he has paid me. He must have an excellent taste ! and gives me a woful opinion of my own trifles, when he likes them, and cannot see the beauties of a poet that ought to be ranked in the first line. I am more humbled by any applause in the present age, than by hosts of such critics as Dr. Milles. Is not Garrick reckoned a tolerable author, though he has proved how little sense is necessary to form a great actor ! His *Cymon*, his prologues and epilogues, and forty such pieces of trash, are below mediocrity, and yet delight the mob in the boxes, as well as in the footman's gallery. I do not mention the things written in his praise, because he writes most of them himself. But you know any one popular merit can confer all merit. Two women talking of Wilkes, one said he squinted ; the other replied, " Well, if he does, it is not more than a man should squint." For my part, I can see extremely well how Garrick acts, without thinking him six feet high. It is said that Shakspeare was a bad actor. Why do not his divine plays make our wise judges conclude that he was a good one ? They have not a proof of the contrary, as they have in Garrick's works—but what is it to you or me what he is ? We may see him act with pleasure, and nothing obliges us to read his writings. Adieu, dear sir, yours most truly,

H. W.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO THE
REV. W. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, March 28, 1779.

I HAVE been much amused with new travels through Spain, by a Mr. Swinburne,—at least with the account of the Alhambra, of the minor parts of which there are two beautiful prints. The Moors were the most polished, and had most taste of any people in the Gothic ages, and I hate the knave Ferdinand and his bigoted queen for destroying them. These new travels are simple, and do tell one a little more than late voyages, by whose accounts one would think there was nothing in Spain but Muleteers and Fandangos. In truth, there does not seem to be much worth seeing but prospects,—and those, unless I were a bird, I would never visit, when the accommodations are so wretched.

Mr. Cumberland has given the town a masque, called Calypso, which is a prodigy of dulness. Would you believe that such a sentimental writer would be so gross as to make Cantharides one of the ingredients of the love potion for enamouring Telemachus? If you think I exaggerate, here are the lines :

To these the hot Hispanian fly
Shall bid his languid pulse beat high.

Proteus and Antiope are Minerva's missionaries for securing the prince's virtue, and, in recompense, they are married and crowned king and queen.

I have bought, at Hudson's sale, a fine design for a chimney piece, by Holbein for Henry VIIIth.

If I had a room left, I would erect it. It is certainly not so Gothic as that in my Holbein room, but there is a great deal of taste for that bastard style.

I do intend, under Mr. Essex's inspection, to begin my offices next spring. It is late in my day, I confess, to return to brick and mortar, but I shall be glad to perfect my plan, or the next possessor will marry my castle to a Doric stable. There is a perspective through two or three rooms in the Alhambra, that might easily be improved into the Gothic, though there seems but small affinity between them, and they might be finished within with Dutch tiles and painting, or bits of ordinary marble, as there must be gilding.—Mosaic seems to have been their chief ornament for walls, ceilings, and floors. Fancy must sport in the furniture, and mottoes might be very gallant, and would be very Arabesque. I would have a mixture of colours, but with strict attention to harmony and taste; and some one should predominate, as supposing it to be the favourite colour of the lady who was sovereign of the knight's affections who built the house. Carpets are classically Mahometan, and fountains,—but, alas! our climate, till last summer, was never romantic! Were I not so old, I would at least build a Moorish novel—for you see my head runs on Granada, and by taking the most picturesque parts of the Mahometan and Catholic religions, and with the mixture of African and Spanish names, one might make something very agreeable,—at least, I will not give the hint to Mr. Cumberland.—Adieu.

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO THE
REV. W. COLE.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 5, 1780.

I HAVE been turning over the new second volume of the Biographia, and find the additions very poor and lean performances. The lives, entirely new, are partial and flattering, being contributions of the friends of those whose lives are recorded. This publication, made at a time when I have lived to see several of my contemporaries deposited in this national temple of Fame, has made me smile, and made me reflect that many preceding authors, who have been installed there with much respect, may have been as trifling personages as those we have known, and now behold consecrated to memory. Three or four have struck me particularly, as Dr. Birch, who was a worthy good natured soul, full of industry and activity, and running about, like a young setting dog, in quest of any thing new or old, and with no parts, taste, or judgment. Then there is Dr. Blackwell, the most impertinent literary cockcomb upon earth. But the editor has been so just, as to insert a merited satire on his Court of Augustus. The third is Dr. Browne, that mountebank, who for a little time made as much noise by his "Estimate," as ever quack did by a nostrum. I do not know whether I ever told you how much I was struck the only time I ever saw him. You know one object of the anathemas of his Estimate was the Italian opera: yet did I

find him, one evening in Passion week, accompanying some of the Italian singers at a concert at Lady Carlisle's. A clergyman, no doubt, is not obliged to be on his knees the whole week before Easter, and music and a concert are harmless amusements; but when Cato or Calvin are out of character, reformation becomes ridiculous. But poor Dr. Browne was mad, and therefore might be in earnest, whether he played the fool or the reformer.

You recollect, perhaps, the threat of Dr. Kippis to me, which is to be executed on my father, for my calling the first edition of the *Biographia* the *Vindictio Britannica*. But observe how truth emerges at last! In this new volume, he confesses that the article of Lord Arlington, which I had specified as one of the most censurable, is the one most deserving that censure, and that the character of Lord Arlington is palliated beyond all truth or reason. Words stronger than mine: yet mine deserved to draw vengeance on my father! So a Presbyterian divine inverts divine judgment, and visits the sins of the children on the parents!

Cardinal Beaton's character, softened in the first edition, gentle Dr. Kippis pronounces detestable. Yet was I to blame for hinting at such defects in that work! and yet my words are quoted to show that Lord Orrery's poetry was ridiculously bad. In like manner, Mr. D. Cumberland, who assumes the whole honour of publishing his grandfather's *Lucan*, and does not deign to mention its being published at Strawberry Hill

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(though, by the way, I believe it will be oftener purchased for having been printed there than for wearing Mr. Cumberland's name to the dedication), and yet he quotes me for having praised his ancestor in one of my publications. These little instances of pride and spleen divert me, and then make me sadly reflect on human weaknesses. I am very apt myself to like what flatters my opinions or passions, and to reject scornfully what thwarts them, even in the same persons. The longer one lives, the more one discovers one's own ugliness in the features of others. Yours ever,

H. WALPOLE.

P. S.—I remember two other instances where my impartiality, or at least my sincerity, have exposed me to double censure. Many, perhaps you, have condemned my severity on Charles I. Yet the late Mr. Hollis wrote against me in the newspapers, for condemning the republicans for the destruction of ancient monuments. Some blamed me for undervaluing the Flemish and Dutch painters in my preface to the *Odes Walpolianæ*. Barry, the painter, because I laughed at his extravagances, says, in his rejection of that school, "But I leave them to be admired by the Hon. H. W. and such judges." Would not one think I had been their champion?

THE HON. HORACE WALPOLE TO THE
REV. W. COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1780.

You may like to know one is alive, dear sir, after a massacre and the conflagration of a capital. I was in it both on the Friday, and on the *black Wednesday*, the most horrible night I ever beheld, and which, for six hours together, I expected to end in half the town being reduced to ashes.

I can give you little account of the origin of this shocking affair. Negligence was certainly its nurse, and religion only its godmother. The ostensible author is in the Tower. Twelve or fourteen thousand men have quashed all tumults; and as no bad account is come from the country, except for a moment at Bath, and as eight days have passed, nay more, since the commencement, I flatter myself the whole nation is shocked at the scene, and that, if plan there was, it was laid only in and for the metropolis. The lowest and most villanous of the people, and to no great amount, were almost the sole actors.

I hope your electioneering rioting has not nor will mix in these tumults. It would be most absurd; for Lord Rockingham, the Duke of Richmond, Sir George Savile, and Mr. Burke, the patrons of toleration, were devoted to destruction as much as the ministers. The rails torn from Sir George's house were the chief weapons and instruments of the mob. For the honour of the nation, I should be glad to have it proved that the French were the engineers. You and I have

lived too long for our comfort,—shall we close our eyes in peace? You and I, that can amuse ourselves with our books and papers, feel as much indignation at the turbulent as they have scorn for us. It is hard at least, that they who disturb nobody, can have no asylum in which to pursue their innocent indolence. Who is secure against Jack Straw and a whirlwind? How I abominate Mr. Bankes and Dr. Solander, who routed the poor Otaheitans out of the centre of the ocean, and carried our abominable passions among them! Not even that poor little speck could escape European restlessness. Och! I have seen many tempestuous scenes, and outlived them! The present prospect is too thick to see through,—it is well hope never forsakes us. Adieu.—Yours, most sincerely,

H. W.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS UNCLE, MR. NAGLE.

Wimpole Street, Cavendish Square, 11 October, 1759.

DEAR SIR,

My brother has been beforehand with me in almost every thing I could say. My conduct stands in need of as many apologies as his, but I am afraid our apologies might be almost as troublesome as our neglects. All I can say is, that I have been, I think it is now eleven years from the county of Cork, yet my remembrance of my friends there is as fresh as if I had left it yesterday. My gratitude for their favours, and my

love for their characters is rather heightened, as the oftener I think of them they must be—and I think of them very often. This I can say with great truth. Believe me, dear sir, it would be a great pleasure to me to hear as often from you as it is convenient. Do not give yourself any sort of trouble about franks; I value very little that trifling expense, and I should very little deserve to hear from my friends, if I scrupled to pay a much higher price for that satisfaction. If I had any thing that you could have pleasure in, to send you from hence, I should be a punctual correspondent; there is nothing here, except what the newspapers contain, that can interest you; but nothing can come from the Blackwater which does not interest me very greatly. Poor Dick is on the point of quitting us; however, he has such advantageous prospects where he is going, that I part from him with the less regret. One of the first merchants here has taken him by the hand, and enabled him to go off with a very valuable cargo. He has another advantage and satisfaction in his expedition,—one of our best friends here goes at the same time in one of the first places in the island.

Mrs. Burke is very sensible of your goodness, and desires that I should make you her acknowledgments. We equally wish it were in our power to accept of your kind invitation; and that no greater obstacle intervened to keep us from seeing Ballyduffe, but the distance. We are too good travellers to be frightened at that. I have made a much longer journey than the land part of it this summer. However, it is not impossible

but we may one day have the pleasure of embracing you at your own house. I beg you will salute for us the good houses of Ballydwalter, Ballylegan, and Ballynahaliok, *et nati natorum, et qui nascuntur ab illis*. Our little boys are very well, but I should think them still better, if they (or the one that is on his legs) were running about the Bawn at Ballyduffe, as his father used to do. —Farewell, my dear uncle, and believe me your affectionate kinsman and humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

I forgot to say any thing of the irregularity which you have found in the papers for some time passed. The summer has made the town thin of members of parliament, so that we were sometimes at a loss; but now we shall be pretty secure on that head, and you shall have your papers more regularly.

EDMUND BURKE TO AGMONDISHAM
VESEY, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Sunning Hill, September 10th, 1760.

I CANNOT express how much I am obliged to you for your kind and successful endeavours in my favour: of whatever advantage the remittance was, the assurance you give me of my father's reconciliation was a great deal more pleasing, and both indeed were rendered infinitely more agreeable to me by passing through your hands. I am sensible how very much I am indebted to

your goodness upon this occasion. If one has but little merit, it is some consolation to have partial friends. Lord Lyttleton has been at Hagley for this month past, or near the matter; where, for the first time, he receives his friends in his new house. He was so obliging to invite me: I need not say that I am much concerned to find I shall not be able to obey his lordship's commands, and that I must lose, for this year at least, the sight of that agreeable place, and the conversation of its agreeable owner. Mrs. Montagu is, I believe, at Tunbridge, for she told me, on her leaving town, that she intended to make a pretty long stay there. May I flatter myself with the hopes of seeing you this winter in London? I cannot so easily forget the evenings I have passed, not to be most desirous of renewing them.—I wish most heartily that Mrs. Vesey's health may be so well established, that she may be able to bear the late sitting up, for I foresee that must be the case whenever she comes to London,—it is a fine she must pay for being so agreeable. Mrs. Burke looks upon herself to be very unhappy that she had not the honour of being known to Mrs. Vesey, but is in hopes that she may this winter be so fortunate. Once more I give you thanks for your kind interposition.—Believe me, dear sir, your much obliged humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS UNCLE, MR. NAGLE.

MY DEAR SIR,

October 14th, 1765.

SINCE I heard from you, our little party at Queen Anne Street has been reinforced by a person who loves you as well as I do, poor Richard of Grenada. He left that island in no very good state of health, and after a great deal of vexation from, but also after a great and perfect triumph over his enemies, and a set of the greatest villains that ever existed. He has a leave of absence for six months; and is, I think, already as completely reestablished in health, strength, and spirits, as we could wish. We all join in giving you joy on the occasion of our friend Katty's match; and only wish her that she may be as happy in a husband as her mother was; and much as we regard her, we cannot wish her better. Pray remember our hearty congratulations to the young couple.

I am sincerely concerned for the match that Garret Atty was so unfortunate as to make; and did from the beginning expect no better issue of it, in a country circumstanced as ours is; assure my uncle, that there is no one step on earth in my power that I would not gladly take to give ease to his mind, which must be cruelly agitated; I most sincerely pity him; but I believe, when he reflects how newly, and almost as a stranger, I am come about these people, and knows the many industrious endeavours which malice and envy (very unprovoked indeed) have used to ruin

me, he will see that so early a request to suspend the operation of the laws, upon my bare word, against the finding of a jury of the greatest county of the kingdom, and that upon the most unpopular point in the world, could have no other effect than to do me infinite prejudice, without the least possibility of succeeding in the object I aimed at. This, I am sure, your own good sense will point out to both of you, and will satisfy my uncle that no vain and timorous delicacy, but the real conviction I have of the inefficacy of the application with regard to him, prevents my taking a warm and active part in this affair. My brother tells me that poor Barret is likely to do well in Grenada; he is industrious and active; he must indeed struggle with some difficulty and much labour at first,—but it is the road, and the only road to an establishment. It is now time for me to make some inquiry about my young friend, your grandson Ned. I have really been so hurried with the many changes which have happened in my affairs, and those of my friends, for some time past, that I have not had leisure to inquire much about him. My brother and I will consult some proper method of having him sent to sea, under honest and good natured management; give me some account of him, and whether you still continue in opinion that this way of life will be advisable for him. If your sentiments are the same they formerly were upon this article, I hope you had an eye to the sea in the education he has since had; we may in a short time complete it here. You cannot think how happy you would make us

by writing often, and being as particular as you can about any thing that concerns you. Thank my cousin Garret for his kind concern in my affairs : whenever he has any account to make up, he will settle it with you ; by this you have my letter of attorney, empowering you to act for me. If you should see counsellor Murphy and the colonel, make my hearty compliments to them. Once more I beg to hear speedily from you.— Jane and Dick are truly yours ; so is, my dear uncle, your affectionate friend,

E. BURKE.

I saw Dick Hennessy here some time ago ; his family is well,—his wife ready to fall to pieces. I recollect that Garret in his lifetime used to allow to a poor neighbour of yours some malt, or some such small present at Christmas ; let it be continued to him, and charge it to my account. Jenny intended as much more. Let him have it, either in that way or any other which he may like better : and if poor Philpot be alive, you will direct that he have a dozen of port or some good strong wine at Christmas, and now and then a bottle or two before that time. You will advance the money to cousin Garret, and place it to my account. Until they can be had to Dublin, be so good to be very careful of the papers in your hands.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS UNCLE, MR. NAGLE.

MY DEAR SIR,

[Early in 1766.]

I AM not a little ashamed to find myself so long in your debt, especially as your health seemed in so uncertain a situation at the time when you wrote. Believe me I was not indifferent to you, though a most excessive hurry of various sorts of business scarce left me a moment's leisure to tell you so. In reality, I am now far from idle. Be so good to let me hear from you soon, and gratify me with an account of your amendment. There are few things could give me a more sincere uneasiness than any suffering of yours. You mention some particulars relative to my accounts : you know I am not very knowing in the particulars of them, and may easily be guilty of mistakes. I leave all to your discretion and friendship. I could wish that the little commissions, I spoke of in my last letter, should be performed ; and as you have probably nothing of mine in your hands, you may draw on me for the charge, as well as for what other matters you may think fit to do for the poor of your village and parish at this rigorous season.

To be sure the trees ought to be replaced ; and too many of them cannot be planted,—as allowance must be made for those that naturally will be stolen and destroyed in a country so ill supplied with wood as yours.

If I remember right, you said something about poor Garret's * horses ; I don't now remember

* Mr. Burke's brother.

what. Do as you think best; always remembering what he said at his death, that those of them he was fond of should be put into such hands as would use them tenderly. His steward at Clo-hir, I think, was a sort of favourite of Garret's; if so, he will in all things be treated accordingly. If the poor on that farm be in distress, you will relieve them a little, and you may depend on it, your bills for the whole will be punctually answered; else it would not be reasonable to desire that you should be in advance for me.

Dick has been for some time past at Paris. It is true he has not wrote; but no man living loves and values you more,—not even myself. He will make up for his neglects.

By your saying nothing of Ned, though I have been very particular about him two or three times, I conclude you have changed your mind in relation to our former plan for him. In whatever way you think best to put him, you shall always find me equally ready to assist him; for I love his father, and I think very well of the boy's own dispositions. Jenny and little Dick desire me to wish you all many happy years. Pray remember us affectionately to our dear friends at Bally-walter, to all the Garrets, to my friend and agent, to Ballyegan, and to all those with whom I hope you passed a Christmas in the old manner—cheerful and happy. May you have many of them!

I am myself well, other than a cold I got on Monday se'nnight at my election at Wendover. The event of that election I am sure will give

you pleasure ; and at your next meeting you will drink Lord Verney and my old friend (and indeed yours) Will Burke. It was on Lord Verney's interest I was chosen at that borough. I am with unalterable affection, my dear uncle, your affectionate,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS UNCLE, MR. NAGLE.

MY DEAR SIR,

October 21st, 1767.

I AM almost apprehensive that my long silence has put even your good nature and forgiveness to a trial, and that you begin to suspect me of some neglect of you. I assure you that there are but very few things which could make me more uneasy than your entertaining such a notion.—However, to avoid all risk of it, though I have very little to say, I will trouble you with a line or two, if it were only to tell you, that we always keep a very strong and very affectionate memory of our friends in Roche's country. Katty and our friend Courtney, I believe, can tell you that we never passed a day without a bumper to your health, which, if it did you no good, was a real pleasure to ourselves. I take it for granted that the party was not much worse for their ramble, nor totally grown foppish by their travels,—I mean to except Garret, who certainly will be undone by his jaunt ; he will be like those ingenious farmers in Gulliver, who carry on their

husbandry in the most knowing manner in the world, but never have any crop. To complete his ruin, you will tell him I have not forgot the young bull which I mentioned to him; but I find I antedated my promise a little, for he was not calved when Garret was here; however, my Lord Rockingham has had one of the finest bull calves that can be,—he is of an immense size; though, when I left Yorkshire, he was not more than seven weeks old. His sire is one of the largest I have ever seen, and before he was bought by his present owner, was let to cover at half a guinea a time. He is of the short-horned Holderness breed; and undoubtedly his kind would not do for your pastures, but he will serve to cross the stem and mend your breed. I take the calf to be too young to travel; but by the time he is a year old, I fancy the best method of sending him will be to get some careful fellow who comes from your country to harvest in England, to take charge of him on his return. Let this man, if such can be found, call upon me, and he shall have further directions. You see I encourage Garret in his *idle schemes*; my use of this phrase puts me in mind of my uncle James (indeed I wanted nothing to put me in mind of him): I heard lately from Ned Barret of his illness, which gives me a most sincere concern; I hope to hear shortly that he is better. I am told too, that poor James Hennessy, of Cork, is in a bad way. He was as sensible and gentlemanlike a man as any in our part of the country,—and I feel heartily for him and his wife.

Be so good to remember us all to John, to

Mr. Courtney and Mrs. Courtney—thank them for the pleasure we had in their company last summer. Give Garret the enclosed memorandum; if you should find it inconvenient to give us a line yourself, he will be so good as to let us hear from him soon; not but we are much obliged to him for the letters he has written to us, and to our friend English,—assure him that when we have any good news, he will be the first to hear it. Farewell, my dear sir—all here are very truly yours; and believe me your ever affectionate nephew,

EDMUND BURKE.

Pat Nagle behaves very well, is exceedingly attentive to his business; and upon my word, from what I see of him, I think him a decent and intelligent young fellow. He has repaid me the twenty guineas he had from me.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS COUSIN, GARRET
NAGLE, ESQ.

MY DEAR GARRET,

March 6th, 1768.

I RECEIVED your last, from Ballyduff with the most sincere sorrow. Indeed, on the return of my uncle's complaints, I gave up all hope, considering the nature of his disorder, and the time of his life. I did not neglect to apply to doctor Nugent; but at this distance, and with no full detail of circumstances and symptoms before him,

he would not venture to prescribe. I make no doubt that he has skilful assistance in his own neighbourhood ; and doctor Nugent would cheerfully have added to it, but from fear of attempting any thing in a case which he cannot fully be master of. I suppose this letter will hardly find my dear friend alive. We shall all lose, I believe, one of the very best men that ever lived,—of the clearest integrity, the most genuine principles of religion and virtue, the most cordial good nature and benevolence that I ever knew, or, I think, ever shall know. However, it is a comfort that he lived a long, healthy, unblemished life, loved and esteemed by all that knew him, and left children behind who will cultivate his memory, and; I trust, follow his example ; for of all the men I have seen in any situation, I really think he is the person I should wish myself, or any one I greatly loved, the most to resemble. This I do not say from the impression of my immediate feeling, but from my best judgment,—having seen him at various times of my life, from my infancy to the last year, having known him very well, and knowing a little (by too long habits) of mankind at large. In truth, my dear Garret, I fear I have said this or something to the same purpose before ; but I repeat it again, for my mind is full of it.

I wish you would let our friends at Ballylegan know that poor Patrick Nagle is out of all danger, and recovering fast. He had a sharp struggle for it. They will rejoice in his recovery. I take him to be a very worthy and valuable young man in all respects. Here we have nothing new.

Politics have taken no turn that is favourable to us, but, just now, I do not feel the more unpleasantly for being, and my friends being, out of all office. You are, I suppose, full of bustle in your new elections; I am convinced all my friends will have the good sense to keep themselves from taking any part in struggles, in the event of which they have no share, and no concern. Adieu, my dear Garret, and believe me to you, and to all with you at Ballyduff and Bloomfield, a most sincere and affectionate friend and kinsman,

EDM. BURKE.

How does Ned Nagle go on? It is time now to think of sending him to sea, and we are considering the best means for doing it. I suppose you have got Mr. W. Burke's letter.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS COUSIN, GARRET
NAGLE, ESQ.

Gregories, December 27th, 1768.

MY DEAR GARRET,

I WAS very much hurried, more so than I have ever been in my life, when I received your letter; and I continued in the same course of full employment for some time, or I should have given you a more immediate answer. I am sorry, that with regard to the business it contained, the speediness of my answer would have been the only thing very pleasing in it, as unluckily I have no acquaintance with Mr. Madden,—I do not remember so much as to have seen him.

Ned Nagle is gone off in very good health,—with good hopes, and fair prospects before him. I loved his father very much; and the boy himself has gained upon me exceedingly. He has a spirited and pleasing simplicity in his manner, which has got him the affection of as many as have seen him, and in particular recommended him to the owner of the ship in which he has sailed, who is a man of great fortune and good natured, and will in future be very useful to him. My brother has taken care that he should in all respects be provided for as well as if he had been his own son. It gave me a good impression of the poor fellow, that he seemed anxious about his nurse, whom he represented as not in the best circumstances. I told him I would order a gown for her as a present from him; you will be so good to give her a guinea for that purpose, and put it to my account. He wrote from some port into which the vessel put, and I send you his letter that you may see in what spirits he is.

About two months ago your brother James called upon me: until then I knew nothing of his having been in London. He was extremely poor, in a very bad state of health, and with a wife to all appearance as wretched and as sickly as he, and big with child into the bargain. It was evident enough that, with his epileptic distemper, he was very unfit to get his bread by hard labour. To maintain them here would be very heavy to me; more indeed than I could bear, with the very many other calls I have upon me, of the same, as well as of other kinds. So I thought the better way would be to send them

back to their own country, where, by allowing them a small matter, we might enable them to live. My brother was of the same opinion,—so we provided them for the journey homewards; and nothing but the hurry I mentioned, prevented my desiring you to give him, on my account, wherewithal to buy some little furniture, and a couple of cows. I then thought to have allowed him ten pounds a year. His wife told me, that with a little assistance she could earn something; and thus it might be possible for them to subsist. This day I got a letter from him, in which the poor man tells me that he is more distressed than ever; and that you showed great resentment to him, so far as even to refuse to give him any thing that I should appoint for him. I can readily excuse the first effect of warmth in an affair that must touch you so nearly. But you must naturally recollect, that his indigent circumstances, his unfortunate marriage, and the weakness of his mind, which was in a great measure the cause of both, make him a just object of pity, and not of anger; and that his relation to us neither confers upon you nor me any right whatsoever to add to his affliction and punishment—but rather calls upon us to do him all the little good offices in our power to alleviate his misfortunes. A little reflection will make you sensible of this; I therefore wish you would not only give him now six or seven guineas on my account, but that you would, by yourself or some friend, take care that it should be laid out in a manner most beneficial for him, and not entrusted to his own management. If you are not near him, I dare say Dav.

Crotty or Jack Nagle would look to his settlement. I can have no improper view in this ; no more than in the other affair, which I earnestly recommended to you, and offered my assistance to conclude. But you, very justly I suppose, paid no regard to my opinions or wishes ; I hope you will have no reason to be dissatisfied with what you have resolved on that occasion.

Mr. Doran of Liverpool has informed me, that he could not send the bull to Cork, but that he has shipped him for Dublin, where by this time he is arrived. Mrs. Burke of the Mall is to take care of him. The great point now is to have a safe person to convey him to the county of Cork.

You remember the usual allowance I have made for these two or three years to some poor persons in your county. You will be so obliging to continue it to them according to my plan of last year, which you can refer to or remember. You will not scruple to advance this for me ; and I do not doubt but your good nature will prevail on you to take the trouble.

As to my farming—I go on pretty well. All my wheat is in the ground this month past ; which is more than some of my neighbours have been able to compass, on account of the wetness of the season.

Remember us all most affectionately to Molly, the young gentlemen, and the ladies, and believe me, my dear Garret, most sincerely yours,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS COUSIN, GARRET
NAGLE, ESQ.

MY DEAR GARRET, Beaconsfield, August 2, 1776.
I do most heartily wish myself with you. I should wish it even if I were not put in mind by this burning weather of the breezy mountains, shady woods, and refreshing waters of Killarney. We have got a summer at last, and it is paying off its arrears of heat with compound interest. Indeed I long sincerely to see you; and if I were not held by various ties, and engaged in various occupations (though neither very pleasant nor important), and if I were as rich as, I thank God, I am still healthy and active, I should this summer pay you a visit in your Woodhouse; that is to say, if you would deign to receive so humble a person after all your great and titled guests. If I see Lord Kenmare, I shall certainly thank him for his civilities to you. I certainly am as much pleased with them as if they were offered to myself; and, indeed, a little more.—My acquaintance with Lord Winchelsea is very slight; but I have known Lord Pembroke pretty intimately for some time. We may meet this summer, and we shall talk you over. I wish you had named me to him.

What you say of Lord Shelburne is more important. I very well remember your application to me some time ago; I remember, too, that I mentioned it to Colonel Barre. Nothing farther came of it. I believe that agency was not vacant

when you wrote. Between ourselves, and I would not have it go farther, there are, I believe, few who can do less with Lord Shelburne than myself. He had formerly, at several times, professed much friendship to me; but whenever I came to try the ground, let the matter have been never so trifling, I always found it to fail under me. It is, indeed, long since he has made even professions. With many amiable qualities, he has some singularities in his character. He is suspicious and whimsical; and, perhaps, if I stood better with him than I do, perhaps my recommendation would not have the greatest weight in the world. This I mention as between ourselves. In the mean time, if an opportunity occurs, I shall do the best I can for you. I hope I am not inattentive to my friends to the best of my power; and let me assure you, that I have ever looked upon you as a friend, whose ease and welfare I have at heart as much as the interest of any person whatsoever. But, indeed, there is little in my power; and if I can serve any person it is by mere accident. I gave assurances to Ned Barret, when I thought myself sure of an object for him, but I was disappointed,—and few things have given me more concern. But he and Frank Kiernan have informed me of your engagement for the woods. I trust it will turn out as much for your advantage as you expected.

Poor Ned Nagle, when he came from the Mediterranean, and had hopes of relaxing himself for a while on the home station, was suddenly ordered to cruise off Saint Helena, to secure the

East India ships against the American privateers. Wat is in London, I saw him some days ago. He is well ; and I believe a good natured worthy man. The company has agreed to make him an allowance until he can be regularly employed again. As to Ned Nagle, he is perfectly liked by all the captains he has served under, as a very good officer. He may probably do good service in some better times, and in a course of employment which I may like better for him than any which the present war affords.

My son is now at home with me at his vacation. I think you would like him if you were acquainted. Richard, the elder, is in town. If his business had prospered, you would have been one of the first to hear of it : but we do not trouble our friends except with pleasing news. He has had much wrong done to him ; but the thing is not yet desperate. I believe that the commissioner who goes out will not have adverse instructions.

I have not been punctual in the newspapers, nor can I undertake it, we are so little regular. But I shall endeavour, now you are from home, to amuse you a little.

Wat Nagle was punctual about the money you ordered ; I thank you for that and every thing ; and am ever with the greatest regard, my dear Garret, your affectionate kinsman, &c. &c.

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS COUSIN, GARRET
NAGLE, ESQ.

MY DEAR GARRET, Beaconsfield, Oct. 2d, 1777.

I AM heartily obliged to you for your letter, and for your kind remembrance of me when you happened to see so many of my most particular friends in so remote and sequestered a spot as the lake of Killarney. Ned Nagle told me that they were at your lodge, but your letter only expresses that you dined with them: I am sure that you passed a pleasant day, and I may venture to say, with no less certainty, that the satisfactions of the lake of Killarney were heightened by meeting you there, and by your obliging attentions to them. You are now become the man of the Lough, and must be admitted to be the true *Garroit Jarlu*, who is come at last. If you are not that Garret, he will never come, and the honest Kerry men will be disappointed from generation to generation. Don't you like Charles Fox? If you were not pleased on that short acquaintance, you would on a further; for he is one of the pleasantest men in the world, as well as the greatest genius that perhaps this country has ever produced. If he is not extraordinary, I assure you the British dominions cannot furnish any thing beyond him. I long to talk with him about you and your Lough. As to the thoughts of our visit to Ireland, it may possibly be in times more favourable to us both; but I am far from being able, at present, to engage for any thing.

I shall certainly remember what you say of Lord Kenmare. The moment I get to town I shall wait upon him.

The captain, to whom you desire to be remembered, is one step nearer to a title to that appellation; for he was yesterday made a lieutenant, as the enclosed letter from Mr. Stephens, secretary to the Admiralty, will show you. This gentleman has been always very good to our Edmund, and steady in his protection to him. He had but just served the time necessary for his qualification, and could not have been made sooner, if he had been the first man in the kingdom in point of rank and interest. Indeed, all circumstances considered, he has been very fortunate. I dare say you will drink Mr. Stephens's health, as well as success to our young officer. I hope you will live to see him an admiral: at least, this is the talk of friends, on any promotion of those they love. Poor Wat Nagle has got out of a most disagreeable scrape, into which any man living might have fallen, but for which every man might not have been prepared with equally satisfactory evidence. It was very lucky for him, that my brother was in town at the time. He procured bail for him, and gave him letters for Bristol, and did every thing else which his disagreeable situation required. I also went to town; but my presence happily proved not necessary, as the grand jury threw out the bills. I wrote his brother Garret to put him out of his pain on so very unpleasant an accident. Mrs. Burke and my brother and son desire to be

cordially remembered to you and your son and family, and your worthy neighbours on the Blackwater. I find by Ned that the old spirit and character of that county is fully kept up, which rejoices me beyond measure. I am ever, my dear Garret, your affectionate kinsman and humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO HIS COUSIN, GARRET
NAGLE, ESQ.

Beaconsfield, August 25, 1778.

MY DEAR GARRET,

YOUR letter came upon me at the very instant that I was sitting down to write to you. I had deferred it, until I should be able to congratulate you on the success of the important bill which had been for some time depending in the parliament of Ireland. I now wish you joy of that success, with the most cordial satisfaction. Be assured that no event of my time has given me such pleasure. The plan of relief indeed is not quite so large and liberal as that adopted in England upon the same subject; but still it is a great acquisition. It is highly beneficial in itself; and it contains a principle, which in time will extend further; and which cannot fail, by a judicious use of opportunities, of putting you upon as good a footing as people of a persuasion different from that of the state can reasonably expect. You may now raise up your heads, and think yourselves men. The mask is taken off.

You are now for the first time acknowledged as subjects, and protected as such. Laws, indeed, cannot make men rich or happy. That they must do for themselves. But the law now leaves their natural faculties free. Whatever inheritance has come to them from their ancestors is not made any longer the instrument of distracting the peace and destroying the credit of their families. Those who have nothing but the means of acquiring substance, their industry, skill, and good economy, have those means left free. When one considers the force of powerful and inveterate prejudice, which must naturally operate against your relief, and the many errors, to call them by no worse a name, into which some of those who had the conduct of this business have fallen, it is rather to be wondered how so much has been done, than how no more came to be obtained. If some anger appears in many upon this occasion, remember, it is pleasanter to endure the rage of disappointment than the insolence of victory. There will be much arming, much blustering, and many pretended fears and apprehensions on this occasion. But I recommend it to you, and all you converse with, to bear all such things with good humour and humility. It will all speedily pass over. It is only the natural vent and purging off of an old distemper. It is your interest at this time to show that the favour you have received has produced the best effects imaginable; that you are truly attached to the constitution which has opened its doors to receive you; that you are modest and placable to those whose opinions have induced them to

oppose your relief; and that you are thoroughly grateful to those whose humanity and large sentiments have made that opposition fruitless. Indeed you have found your principal friends where vulgar opinion would least have sought for them. Those gentlemen, whose ancestors had been the most active in the framing oppressive laws, were the most zealous for their repeal; two of them went over to Ireland for no other reason than to vote for it. I mean Mr. Dunbar and Lord Lucan. The third is Mr. Mason, a descendant of Lord Molesworth. Lord Inchiquin likewise gave his proxy for the relieving act. You know the merits of the speaker on this business, and of the gentlemen who distinguished themselves in the debate, particularly those of the law. When the English acts had passed, I sent a copy of the first act, which was printed, to Mr. Goold, of Cork. The second, which related to Ireland, and which repealed the act of King William disabling Catholics from any interest in the last forfeited lands, was not printed when I left town, or I should have sent it. This act, which was moved for by Lord Richard Cavendish, next brother to the Duke of Devonshire, and seconded by Mr. Connolly, was a necessary leading step, without which nothing could be done for Ireland. One of those, you know, is among the worthiest gentlemen in your country; and the other, one of the first ornaments of this, for learning, honour, and bravery. I recommended you to Mr. Connolly for a licence to carry arms. I suppose, in the hurry of so much business, he forgot it, but I shall remind him of what you desire. I men-

tioned your name to Lord Kenmare as a near relation of mine, for whom I had the greatest affection ; and without desiring his future protection in direct terms, I thanked him for what he had already done for you ; which I thought the best way of asking it at that time ; but I have the honour of writing to him this day, and will not fail to refresh his memory concerning you. If some circumstances in my family had not prevented it, I should certainly, with some other friends whom you have not seen, of a long time, have surprised you among your woods, waters, and mountains. All here desire to be most affectionately remembered to you and yours. I am ever, my dear Garret, your most affectionate kinsman, and faithful humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

The papers but too fully inform you of our bad accounts from * * * *. They are indeed very little different from those which I always expected.

EDMUND BURKE TO MR. BARRY.

MY DEAR BARRY,

London [1765 or 1766].

I AM greatly in arrear to you on account of correspondence ; but not, I assure you, on account of regard, esteem, and most sincere good wishes. My mind followed you to Paris, through your Alpine journey, and to Rome ; you are an admirable painter with your pen as well as with your pencil ; and every one to whom I showed your

letters felt an interest in your little adventures, as well as a satisfaction in your description; because there is not only a taste, but a feeling in what you observe, something that shows that you have a heart; and I would have you by all means keep it. I thank you for Alexander; Reynolds sets a high esteem on it, he thinks it admirably drawn, and with great spirit. He had it at his house for some time, and returned it in a very fine frame; and it at present makes a capital ornament in our little dining room between the two doors. At Rome you are, I suppose, even still so much agitated by the profusion of fine things on every side of you, that you have hardly had time to sit down to methodical and regular study. When you do, you will certainly select the best parts of the best things, and attach yourself to them wholly. You, whose letter would be the best direction in the world to any other painter, want none yourself from me, who know little of the matter. But, as you were always indulgent enough to bear my humour under the name of advice, you will permit me now, my dear Barry, once more to wish you, in the beginning at least, to contract the circle of your studies. The extent and rapidity of your mind carries you to too great a diversity of things, and to the completion of a whole before you are quite master of the parts, in a degree equal to the dignity of your ideas. This disposition arises from a generous impatience, which is a fault almost characteristic of great genius. But it is a fault nevertheless, and one which I am sure you will correct, when you consider that there is

a great deal of mechanic in your profession, in which, however, the distinctive part of the art consists, and without which the first ideas can only make a good critic, not a painter. I confess I am not much desirous of your composing many pieces, for some time at least. Composition (though by some people placed foremost in the list of the ingredients of an art) I do not value near so highly. I know none, who attempts, that does not succeed tolerably in that part: but that exquisite masterly drawing, which is the glory of the great school where you are, has fallen to the lot of very few, perhaps to none of the present age, in its highest perfection. If I were to indulge a conjecture, I should attribute all that is called greatness of style and manner of drawing to this exact knowledge of the parts of the human body, of anatomy and perspective. For by knowing exactly and habitually, without the labour of particular and occasional thinking, what was to be done in every figure they designed, they naturally attained a freedom and spirit of outline; because they could be daring without being absurd: whereas ignorance, if it be cautious, is poor and timid; if bold, it is only blindly presumptuous. This minute and thorough knowledge of anatomy, and practical as well as theoretical perspective, by which I mean to include foreshortening, is all the effect of labour and use in *particular* studies, and not in general compositions. Notwithstanding your natural repugnance to handling of carcasses, you ought to make the knife go with the pencil, and study anatomy in real, and, if you can, in frequent dissections.

You know that a man who despises as you do the minutiae of the art, is bound to be quite perfect in the noblest part of all ; or he is nothing. Mediocrity is tolerable in middling things, but not at all in the great. In the course of the studies I speak of, it would not be amiss to paint portraits often and diligently. This I do not say as wishing you to turn your studies to portrait painting, quite otherwise ; but because many things in the human face will certainly escape you without some intermixture of that kind of study. Well, I think I have said enough to try your humility on the subject. But I am thus troublesome from a sincere anxiety for your success. I think you a man of honour and of genius, and I would not have your talents lost to yourself, your friends, or your country by any means. You will then attribute my freedom to my solicitude about you, and my solicitude to my friendship. Be so good to continue your observations as usual. They are exceedingly grateful to us all, and we keep them by us.

EDMUND BURKE TO MR. BARRY.

* * * As to any reports concerning your conduct and behaviour ; you may be very sure they could have no kind of influence here ; for none of us are of such a make as to trust to any one's report for the character of a person whom we ourselves know. Until very lately, I had never heard of any thing of your proceedings from others : and

when I did, it was much less than I had known from yourself, that you had been upon ill terms with the artists and virtuosi in Rome, without much mention of cause or consequence. If you have improved these unfortunate quarrels to your advancement in your art, you have turned a very disagreeable circumstance to a very capital advantage. However you may have succeeded in this uncommon attempt, permit me to suggest, with that friendly liberty which you have always had the goodness to bear from me, that you cannot possibly have always the same success, either with regard to your fortune or your reputation. Depend upon it, that you will find the same competitions, the same jealousies, the same arts and cabals, the same emulations of interest and of fame, and the same agitations and passions here, that you have experienced in Italy; and if they have the same effect on your temper, they will have just the same effect on your interest; and be your merit what it will, you will never be employed to paint a picture. It will be the same at London as at Rome; and the same at Paris as in London, for the world is pretty nearly alike in all its parts: nay, though it would perhaps be a little inconvenient to me, I had a thousand times rather you would fix your residence in Rome than here, as I should not then have the mortification of seeing with my own eyes a genius of the first rank lost to the world, himself, and his friends, as I certainly must, if you do not assume a manner of acting and thinking here totally different from what your letters from Rome have described to me. That you

have had just subjects of indignation always, and of anger often, I do no ways doubt; who can live in the world without some trial of his patience? But believe me, my dear Barry, that the arms with which the ill dispositions of the world are to be combated, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us, and we reconciled to it, are moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves; which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them; but virtues of a great and noble kind, and such as dignify our nature, as much as they contribute to our repose and fortune; for nothing can be so unworthy of a well composed soul, as to pass away life in bickerings and litigations, in snarling and scuffling with every one about us. Again and again, dear Barry, we must be at peace with our species; if not for their sakes, yet very much for our own. Think what my feelings must be, from my unfeigned regard to you, and from my wishes that your talents might be of use, when I see what the inevitable consequences must be, of your persevering in what has hitherto been your course ever since I knew you, and which you will permit me to trace out to you beforehand. You will come here; you will observe what the artists are doing, and you will sometimes speak a disapprobation in plain words, and sometimes in a no less expressive silence. By degrees you will produce some of your own works. They will be variously criticised; you will defend them; you will abuse those that have attacked you; expostulations, discussions, letters, possi-

bly challenges, will go forward ; you will shun your brethren, they will shun you. In the mean time gentlemen will avoid your friendship, for fear of being engaged in your quarrels : you will fall into distresses, which will only aggravate your disposition for farther quarrels : you will be obliged for maintenance to do any thing for any body ; your very talents will depart, for want of hope and encouragement, and you will go out of the world fretted, disappointed, and ruined. Nothing but my real regard for you could induce me to set these considerations in this light before you. Remember we are born to serve and adorn our country, and not to contend with our fellow citizens, and that in particular your business is to paint, and not to dispute.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD,

Westminster, June 4th, 1776.

PERMIT me to make Mr. Young acquainted with you. To his works, and his reputation, you can be no stranger. I may add, that in conversing with this gentleman, you will find that he is far from having exhausted his stock of useful and pleasing ideas in the numerous publications with which he has favoured the world. He goes into our country to learn, if any thing valuable can be learned, concerning the state of agriculture, and to communicate his knowledge to such gentlemen as wish to improve their estates by such

methods of enlightened culture as none but people of good fortune can employ, especially in the beginning. But examples may be given that hereafter will be useful, when you can prevail on yourselves to let the body of your people into an interest in the prosperity of your country. Your lordship will think it odd, that I can conclude a letter to you without saying a word on the state of public affairs. But what can I say that will be pleasing to a mind like yours? Ireland has missed the most glorious opportunity ever indulged by Heaven to a subordinate state,—that of being the safe and certain mediator in the quarrels of a great empire. She has chosen, instead of being the arbiter of peace, to be a feeble party in the war waged against the principle of her own liberties. But I beg pardon for censuring, or seeming to censure, what I perhaps so little comprehend. It certainly is much above me. Here we are, as we are. We have our little dejections for disappointments, our little triumphs for advantages, our little palliatives for disgraces, in a contest that no good fortune can make less than ruinous. I return to Mr. Young, whom I am sure you will receive with the hospitality which you always show to men of merit. Mrs. Burke joins me in our best compliments to Lady Charlemont. Your lordship, I trust, believes that I have the most affectionate concern in whatever relates to your happiness, and that I have the honour to be ever, my dear lord, your most faithful and obliged humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD,

Whitehall, June 12th, 1782.

THE slight mark of your lordship's remembrance of an old friend, in the end of your lordship's letter to Lord Rockingham, gave me very great satisfaction. It was always an object of my ambition to stand well with you. I ever esteemed and admired your public and private virtues, which have at length produced all the effects which virtue can produce on this side of the grave, in the universal love of your countrymen. I assure you, my lord, that I take a sincere part in the general joy, and hope that mutual affection will do more for mutual help and mutual advantage, between the two kingdoms, than any ties of artificial connexion whatsoever. If I were not persuaded of this, my satisfaction at the late events would not be so complete as it is. For, born as I was in Ireland, and having received what is equal to the origin of one's being, the improvement of it there, and therefore full of love, and I might say of fond partiality for Ireland, I should think any benefit to her, which should be bought with the real disadvantage of this kingdom, or which might tend to loosen the ties of connexion between them, would be, even to our native country, a blessing of very equivocal kind. But I am convinced that no reluctant tie can be a strong one, and that a natural, cheerful alliance will be a far securer link of

connexion than any principle of subordination borne with grudgings and discontent. All these contrivances are for the happiness of those they concern, and if they do not effect this, they do nothing. Go on, and prosper ; improve the liberty you have obtained by your virtue, as a means of national prosperity, and internal as well as external union. I find that Ireland, among other marks of her just gratitude to Mr. Grattan (on which your lordship will present him my congratulations), intends to erect a monument to his honour, which is to be decorated with sculpture. It will be a pleasure to you to know, that at this time a young man of Ireland is here, who, I really think, as far as my judgment goes, is fully equal to our best statuaries, both in taste and execution. If you employ him, you will encourage the rising arts in the decoration of the rising virtue of Ireland ; and though the former, in the scale of things, is infinitely below the latter, there is a kind of relationship between them. I am sure there has been ever a close connexion between them in your mind. The young man's name, who wishes to be employed, is Hickey. I have the honour to be, with the highest sentiments of regard and esteem, my lord, your lordship's most obedient servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD, Gerrard Street, June 1, 1787.

I HAVE a high respect for your lordship of old, as I trust you know ; and as I have the best wishes for my friend, Mr. Francis, I am exceedingly desirous that he should have an opportunity of paying his compliments to the person in Ireland the most worthy the acquaintance of a man of sense and virtue. Mr. Francis has not been in Ireland since the days of his childhood, but he has been employed in a manner that does honour to the country that has given him his birth. When he sees your lordship, he will perceive that ancient morals have not yet deserted at least that part of the world which he revisits, and you will be glad to receive for a while a citizen that has only left his country to be the more extensively serviceable to mankind. May I beg your lordship to make my most respectful and most affectionate compliments, and those of Mrs. Burke and my son, and all that are of our little family, to Lady Charlemont. I hope that Mr. Francis will send back such an account of the health of your lordship, and all yours, as may make us happy. I have the honour to be, my dear lord, with the most cordial attachment, your most affectionate and obliged friend, and faithful servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD,

Beaconsfield, July 19, 1787.

MR. FRANCIS called upon me in his way to his own house, charmed, as I expected he would be, with your character and conversation, and infinitely obliged by your reception of him. Give me leave to convey his thanks to you, and to add mine to them. Every motive induces me to wish your house provided with all the ornaments that are worthy of it; the bust you desire is that which is most essential, and in that which you combine your taste, your friendship, and your principles. When I go to town I shall see Mr. Nollekens, and hasten him as much as I can; there was no bust taken from Lord Rockingham during his lifetime. This is made from a masque taken from his face after his death, and of course must want that animation which I am afraid can never be given to it without hazarding the ground work of the features. Tassie has made a profile in his glass, which is, I think, the best likeness, I mean uncoloured likeness, which exists. I will recommend it to Nollekens; perhaps he may make some advantage of it; though I have observed that artists seldom endeavour to profit of each other's works, though not in the exact line which they profess. Believe me, with the most cordial affection, my dear lord, your lordship's most faithful, and obliged, humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

Gerrard Street, March 29th, 1789.

MY DEAR LORD,

IF I were to write all that is in my heart and head relative to you, and to your proceedings, I should write volumes. At present, I abstain from any subject but that which, at this instant, may give your lordship occasion to remember me.

My friend, Mr. Shippen, of Pennsylvania, a very agreeable, sensible, and accomplished young man, will have the honour of delivering this to your lordship. I flatter myself that you will think of him as I do; I have no doubt that he will find, under your lordship's protection, every thing that he can expect (and he expects a great deal) from Ireland. He has been, for some time, upon his travels on the continent of Europe; and, after this tour, he pays us the compliment of thinking that there are things and persons worth seeing in Ireland. For one person, I am sure I can answer, and am not afraid of disappointing him, when I tell him, that in no country will he find a better pattern of elegance, good breeding, and virtue. I say nothing further to recommend my friend to one to whom a young gentleman, desirous of every sort of improvement, is by that circumstance fully recommended. America and we are not under the same crown, but if we are united by mutual good will, and reciprocal good offices, perhaps it may do almost as well. Mr. Shippen will give you no unfavourable specimen of the *new world*.

Pray remember my most affectionate and respectful compliments, with those of this house, to Lady Charlemont and Miss Hickman, and to all those who do us the honour of their good wishes. Believe me, with sincerest respect and affection, ever, my dear lord, your most faithful, and obedient, humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAREST LORD, Saturday, April 4th, 1780.

You do no more than strict justice in allowing the sincerity of my attachment to you, and my readiness on all occasions to obey your commands. My affections are concerned in your thinking so, and my pride in having it believed by as many as know me.

After I had received your lordship's letter of the 24th of March, I lost no time in attending the P. I cannot say that I executed your lordship's commission literally : I thought it better to let you speak for yourself. To have done otherwise would not have been to do justice to the P. to your lordship, or even with the person charged with your commission. There never was any thing conceived more justly, or expressed with more elegance, than what you have said of his R. H. I did not think it right to spoil so just and so handsome a compliment, by giving it in any other words than your own. I risked more, and, without your authority, put the letter into

his hands. The P. was much pleased, and, I think, affected. The account your lordship has given of the state of politics in Ireland was certainly not what we could have wished, and indeed expected. It was, however, a relief to his R. H. as he found things much better than, from other accounts, he had conceived them.

I never had the least idea that the opposition in Ireland could continue against the presiding administration here, however some individuals might be on principle adverse to it. I am charmed with what I have heard of the Duke of Leinster, I am happy to find him add a character of firmness to the rest of his truly amiable and respectable qualities. Ponsonby* then is, it seems, the proto-martyr. I never saw him until the time of your embassy; but I am not mistaken in the opinion I formed of him, on our first conversation, as a manly, decided character, with a right conformation of mind, and a clear and vigorous understanding. The world will see what is got by leaving a provoked, a powerful enemy; and how well faith is kept by those whose situation has been obtained by their infidelity, one would have thought that personal experience was not necessary for teaching that lesson. As to what you have said of the care to be taken of the martyrs to their duty, that is a thing of course, in case an opportunity occurs. They would not be injured so much, as the leaders would be eternally disgraced, if they were not made their first objects. It would be a shame indeed, if those who sur-

* He had been removed from his office of Postmaster General after the business of the Regency.

render should profit more by the generosity of their enemies than those who hold out to the last biscuit might by the justice and gratitude of their friends. Here we seem to have forgot all serious business.

I have a thousand handsome things to say to your lordship, on the part of the P., with regard to your principles, your liberality of sentiment, the goodness of your heart, and the politeness of your manners. I think him a judge, of these things, and I see that he knows the value of a compliment from one, who has his civility for every body, but the expression of his approbation for very few.

Will your lordship be so good as to remember my affectionate respects to your late colleagues. Mrs. Burke, my brother, and son, beg to present our most grateful duty to Lady Charlemont and Miss Hickman. I am, with the most heartfelt sentiments of affection, my dear lord, &c.

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD, Gerrard Street, July 10th, 1789.

I HAVE little to say of importance, and nothing at all to say that is pleasant. But I do not choose to let my friend Mr. Nevill depart without taking with him some token of my love and respect for your lordship. Your friendship and partiality are things too honourable, and too dear to me, to suffer them to escape from my memory, or from

yourself, if I can help it. Indeed I want consolations, and these are consolations to me of a very powerful and cordial operation. We draw to the end of our business in this strange session. I have taken no part whatever in the latter period, though in the former I exerted myself with all the activity in my power, and which I thought the crisis called for. Nature has made a decision, which no art, nor skill of parties, could have produced. When that was done, I had nothing farther to do. My time of life, the length of my service, and the temper of the public, rendered it very unfit for me to exert myself in the common routine of opposition. *Turpe Senex Miles.* There is a time of life in which, if a man cannot arrive at a certain degree of authority, derived from a confidence from the prince, or the people, which may aid him in his operations, and make him compass useful objects without a perpetual struggle, it becomes him to remit much of his activity. Perpetual failure, even though nothing in that failure can be fixed on the improper choice of the object, or the injudicious choice of means, will detract every day more and more from a man's credit, until he ends without success, and without reputation. In fact, a constant pursuit, even of the best objects, without adequate instruments, detracts something from the opinion of a man's judgment. This, I think, may be, in part, the cause of the inactivity of others of our friends, who are in the vigour of life, and in possession of a great degree of lead and authority. I do not blame them, though I lament that state of the public mind in

which the people can consider the exclusion of such talents, and such virtues, from their service as a point gained to them. The only point in which I can find any thing to blame, in those friends, is their not taking the effectual means, which they certainly had in their power, of making an honourable retreat from the prospect of power into the possession of reputation, by an effectual defence of themselves. There was an opportunity which was not made use of for that purpose, and which could scarcely have failed of turning the tables on their adversaries. But I ought to stop, because I find I am getting into the fault common with all those who lose at any play, that of blaming their partners : and indeed nothing has hastened, at all times, the ruin of declining parties so much as their mutual quarrels and their condemnation of each other.

My particular province has been the East Indies. We have rest, or something like it, for the present ; but depend on it, I shall persevere to the end, and shall not add myself to the number of those bad examples, in which delinquents have wearied out the constancy of their prosecutors. We may not go through all the charges ; I fear it will be out of our power to do this ; but we shall give a specimen of each great head of criminality, and then call for judgment. So far as to a general view of my sole share of business. As to the politics of Ireland, as I see nothing in them very pleasant, I do not wish to revive in your mind what your best philosophy is required to make tolerable. Enjoy your Marino, and your amiable and excellent family. These are

comfortable sanctuaries when more extensive views of society are gloomy, and unpleasant, or unsafe. May I request that your lordship, and Lady Charlemont, will think of us, in your retreat, as of those who love and honour you not the least, amidst the general good opinion in which it is your happiness to live. Ever, my dear lord, your lordship's most faithful, &c.

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

Beaconsfield, August 9th, 1789.

MY DEAREST LORD,

I THINK your lordship has acted with your usual zeal and judgment in establishing a Whig Club in Dublin. These meetings prevent the evaporation of principle in individuals, and give them joint force, and enliven their exertions by emulation. You see the matter in its true light, and with your usual discernment. Party is absolutely necessary at this time ; I thought it always so in this country, ever since I have had any thing to do in public business ; and I rather fear that there is not virtue enough in this period to support party, than that party should become necessary on account of the want of virtue to support itself by individual exertions. As to us here, our thoughts of every thing at home are suspended by our astonishment at the wonderful spectacle which is exhibited in a neighbouring and rival country. What spectators, and what actors ! England gazing with astonishment at a French

struggle for liberty, and not knowing whether to blame or to applaud. The thing, indeed, though I thought I saw something like it in progress for several years, has still somewhat in it paradoxical and mysterious. The spirit, it is impossible not to admire; but the old Parisian ferocity has broken out in a shocking manner. It is true, that this may be no more than a sudden explosion; if so, no indication can be taken from it; but if it should be *character*, rather than accident, then that people are not fit for liberty, and must have a strong hand, like that of their former masters, to coerce them. Men must have a certain fund of natural moderation to qualify them for freedom, else it becomes noxious to themselves, and a perfect nuisance to every body else. What will be the event, it is hard, I think, still to say. To form a solid constitution, requires wisdom, as well as spirit; and whether the French have wise heads among them, or, if they possess such, whether they have authority equal to their wisdom, is yet to be seen. In the meantime, the progress of this whole affair is one of the most curious matters of speculation that ever was exhibited.

Our neighbour, the Duke of Portland, is still somewhat stiff in his limbs, though he can walk. He is the same virtuous, calm, steady character, in all sorts of weather, natural and political. He always thinks and speaks of your lordship as such men as you and he ought to think and speak of each other. I am ever, my most dear lord, your lordship's faithful and affectionate

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

MY DEAR LORD, Beaconsfield, May 25th, 1790.

A MAN makes but a bad figure in apology, even when he has an indulgent friend to whom he may offer it. I think I may as well cast myself at once on your goodness ; for, if you are not of yourself disposed to make excuses for my silence, or to pardon it without any excuse, I really do not know how I can offer any thing which may induce you to forgive me. I am, unfortunately, very irregular and immethodical. To tell you I have been at once much occupied and much agitated with my employment, might make it appear as if I thought myself and my occupations of more consequence than I hope I do. So I leave it with you ; entirely persuaded that you do not think that either neglect of you, or indifference to the matter of your commission, are among the things for which I ought to give no account. I did not receive the drawing quite so early as might be expected. As soon as I could see Lady Rockingham, I gave her the drawing and the inscription : she felt much affected with the tender and melancholy consolation she received from your lordship's genius and friendship. The memorial of Lord Rockingham ought to be in the house of the man whom he resembled the most, and loved the best ; it is a place fit for a temple to his memory. The inscription was such as we both approved of most entirely. I will endeavour to procure for your lordship a drawing

of the monument at Wentworth ; it is really a fine thing, and the situation wonderfully well chosen.—You know what my opinion is about the importance of Ireland, to the safety of the succession, and the tranquillity of this kingdom. With that opinion, as well as from my cordial good wishes to your lordship, and your friends, I rejoice to find, that on the whole, the elections have been favourable. This is more than I dare to promise myself for this side of the water. You will permit me to convey, through your lordship, my most thankful acknowledgments to the Royal Academy of Ireland, for the great honour they have done me. Believe me ever, my dear lord, your faithful and most obliged, humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO THE EARL OF
CHARLEMONT.

Beaconsfield, December 29th, 1791.

MY DEAR LORD,

I HAVE seldom been more vexed than when I found that a visit of mere formality had deprived me of the substantial satisfaction which Mrs. Burke and my brother had, in seeing you as well as they had ever remembered you.—Many things, at that time, had contributed to make that loss very great to me. Your lordship is very good, in lamenting the difference which politics had made between Mr. Fox and me. Your condolence was truly kind ; for my loss has been truly

great, in the cessation of the partiality of a man of his wonderful abilities and amiable disposition. Your lordship is a little angry at politics that can dissolve friendships. If it should please God to lend me a little longer life, they will not, I hope, cause me to lose the few friends I have left; for I have left all politics, I think, for ever. Every thing that remains of my relation to the public will be only in my wishes, which are warm and sincere, that this constitution should be thoroughly understood; for then I am sure it will be sincerely loved; that its benefits may be widely extended, and lastingly continued; and that no man may have an excuse to wish it to have another fortune, than I pray it may long flourish in. I am sure that your country, in whose prosperity I include the most valuable interest of this, will have reason to look back on what you have done for it with gratitude, and will have reason to think the continuance of your health, for her further service, amongst the greatest advantages she is likely to expect.—Here is my son, who will deliver this to you. He will be indemnified for what I have lost: I think I may speak for this my other and better self, that he loves you almost as much as I do. Pray tell Lady Charlemont, and the ladies, how much Mrs. Burke, my brother, and myself, are their humble servants. Believe me, my dear lord, with the most sincere respect and affection, your lordship's most faithful, obliged, and obedient humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO CAPTAIN MERCER.

DEAR SIR,

London, February 26th, 1790.

THE speedy answer I return to your letter, I hope will convince you of the high value I set upon the regard you are so good to express for me, and the obliging trouble which you take to inform my judgment upon matters upon which we are all very deeply concerned. I think perfectly well of your heart and your principles, and of the strength of your natural understanding, which, according to your opportunities, you have not been wanting in pains to improve. If you are mistaken, it is perhaps owing to the impression almost inevitably made by the various careless conversations which we are engaged in through life; conversations in which those who propagate their doctrines have not been called upon for much reflection concerning their end and tendency; and in which those who imperceptibly imbibe the doctrines taught, are not required, by a particular duty, very closely to examine them, or to act from the impressions they receive. I am obliged to *act*, and am therefore bound to call my principles and sentiments to a strict account. As far as my share of a public trust goes, I am in *trust* religiously to maintain the rights and properties of all descriptions of people in the *possession* which they legally hold; and in the *rule* by which alone they can be secure in any possession. I do not find myself at liberty, either as a man, or as a trustee for men, to take a vested property from one man and to give it to another,

because I think that the portion of one is too great, and that of another too small. From my first juvenile rudiments of speculative study to the gray hairs of my present experience, I have never learned any thing else. I cannot be taught any thing else by reason ; and when force comes, I shall consider whether I am to submit to it, or how I am to resist it. This I am sure of, that an early guard against the manifest tendency of a contrary doctrine is the only way by which those who love order can be prepared to resist such force.

The calling men by the names of “ pampered and luxurious prelates,” &c. is in you no more than a mark of your dislike to intemperate and idle expense ; but in others it is used for other purposes. It is often used to extinguish the sense of justice in our minds, and the natural feelings of humanity in our bosoms. Such language does not mitigate the cruel effects of reducing men of opulent condition, and their innumerable dependants to the last distress. If I were to adopt the plan of a spoliatory reformation, I should probably employ such language ; but it would aggravate instead of extenuating my guilt in overturning the sacred principles of property.

Sir, I say that church and state, and human society too, for which church and state are made, are subverted by such doctrines, joined to such practices, as leave no foundation for property in long possession. My dear Captain Mercer, it is not my calling the use you make of your plate in your house, either of dwelling or of prayer,

“pageantry and hypocrisy,” that can justify me in taking from you your own property, and your own liberty to use your own property according to your own ideas of ornament. When you find me attempting to break into your house to take your plate, under any pretence whatsoever, but most of all under pretence of purity of religion and Christian charity, shoot me for a robber and a hypocrite, as in that case I shall certainly be. The “true Christian religion” never taught me any such practices, nor did the religion of my nature, nor any religion, nor any law.

Let those who never abstained from a full meal, and as much wine as they could swallow, for a single day of their whole lives, satirize “luxurious and pampered prelates” if they will. Let them abuse such prelates, and such lords; and such squires, provided it be only to correct their vices. I care not much about the language of this moral satire, if they go no further than satire. But there are occasions, when the language of Falstaff, reproaching the Londoners, whom he robbed in their way to Canterbury, with gorbellies and their city luxury, is not so becoming.

It is not calling the landed estates, possessed by old prescriptive rights, the “accumulations of ignorance and superstition,” that can support me in shaking that grand title, which supersedes all other title, and which all my studies of general jurisprudence have taught me to consider as one principal cause of the formation of states; I mean the ascertaining and securing prescription. But

these are donations made in the "ages of ignorance and superstition." Be it so. It proves that these donations were made long ago; and this is prescription: and this gives right and title. It is possible that many estates about you were originally obtained by arms, that is, by violence, a thing almost as bad as superstition, and not much short of ignorance: but it is old violence; and that which might be wrong in the beginning, is consecrated by time, and becomes lawful. This may be superstition in me, and ignorance: but I had rather remain in ignorance and superstition than be enlightened and purified out of the first principles of law and natural justice. I never will suffer you, if I can help it, to be deprived of the well earned fruits of your industry, because others may want your fortune more than you do, and may have laboured, and do now labour, in vain, to acquire even a subsistence. Nor on the contrary, if success had less smiled on your endeavours, and you had come home insolvent, would I take from any "pampered and luxurious lord" in your neighbourhood one acre of his land, or one spoon from his sideboard, to compensate your losses, though incurred (as they would have been incurred) in the course of a well spent, virtuous, and industrious life. God is the distributor of his own blessings. I will not impiously attempt to usurp his throne, but will keep according to the subordinate place and trust in which he has stationed me, to secure the order of property which I find established in my country. No guiltless man has ever been,

nor ever will, I trust, be ever able to say with truth, that he has been obliged to retrench a dish at his table for any reformatations of mine.

You pay me the compliment to suppose me a foe to tyranny and oppression, and you are therefore surprised at the sentiments I have lately delivered in parliament. I am that determined foe to tyranny, or I greatly deceive myself in my character: and I am sure I am an idiot in my conduct. It is because I am, and mean to continue so, that I abominate the example of France for this country. I know that tyranny seldom attacks the poor, never in the first instance. They are not its proper prey. It falls on the wealthy and the great, whom by rendering objects of envy, and otherwise obnoxious to the multitude, they may more easily destroy; and, when they are destroyed, that multitude which was led to that ill work by the arts of bad men, is itself undone for ever.

I hate tyranny, at least I think so; but I hate it most of all where most are concerned in it. The tyranny of a multitude is a multiplied tyranny. If, as society is constituted in these large countries of France and England, full of unequal property, I must make my choice (which God avert!) between the despotism of a single person or of the many, my election is made. As much injustice and tyranny has been practised in a few months by a French democracy, as in all the arbitrary monarchies in Europe in the forty years of my observation. I speak of public, glaring acts of tyranny; I say nothing of the common effects of old abusive governments, because I do

not know that as bad may not be found in the new. This democracy begins very ill; and I feel no security that what has been rapacious and bloody, in its commencement, will be mild and protecting in its final settlement. They cannot, indeed, in future, rob so much, because they have left little that can be taken. I go to the full length of my principle. I should think the government of the deposed king of France, or of the late king of Prussia, or the present emperor, or the present czarina, none of them, perhaps, perfectly good people, to be far better than the government of twenty-four millions of men, *all as good as you*, and I do not know any body better; supposing that those twenty-four millions would be subject, as infallibly they would, to the same unrestrained, though virtuous, impulses; because it is plain that their majority would think every thing justified by their warm good intentions—they would heat one another by their common zeal—counsel and advice would be lost on them—they would not listen to temperate individuals, and they would be less capable, infinitely, of moderation, than the most heady of those princes.

What have I to do with France, but as the common interest of humanity, and its example to this country, engages me? I know France, by observation and inquiry, pretty tolerably for a stranger; and I am not a man to fall in love with the faults or follies of the old or new government. You reason as if I were running a parallel between its former abusive government and the present tyranny. What had all this to do with the opinions I delivered in parliament,

which ran a parallel between the liberty they might have had, and this frantic delusion. This is the way by which you blind and deceive yourself, and beat the air in your argument with me. Why do you instruct me on a state of the case which has no existence? You know how to reason very well. What most of the newspapers make me say, I know not, nor do I much care. I don't think, however, they have thus stated me. There is a very fair abstract of my speech printed in a little pamphlet, which I would send you if it were worth putting you to the expense.

To discuss the affairs of France and its revolution would require a volume, perhaps many volumes. Your general reflections about revolutions may be right or wrong: they conclude nothing. I don't find myself disposed to controvert them, for I do not think they apply to the present affairs; nay, I am sure they do not. I conceive you have got very imperfect accounts of these transactions. I believe I am much more exactly informed of them.

I am sorry, indeed, to find that our opinions do differ essentially, fundamentally, and are at the utmost possible distance from each other, if I understand you or myself clearly on this subject. Your freedom is far from displeasing to me; I love it; for I always wish to know the full of what is in the mind of the friend I converse with. I give you mine as freely; and I hope I shall offend you as little as you do me. I shall have no objection to your showing my letter to as many as you please. I have no secrets with regard to the public. I have never shrunk from

obloquy; and I have never courted popular applause. If I have met with any share of it, "*non recepi sed rapui.*" No difference of opinion, however, shall hinder me from cultivating your friendship, while you permit me to do so. I have not written this to discuss these matters in a prolonged controversy (I wish we may never say more about them), but to comply with your commands, which ever shall have due weight with me. I am most respectfully and most affectionately yours,

EDMUND BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

Duke Street, Sunday, May 6, 1793.

MY DEAR SIR,

I WAS in the country when your most valuable and most acceptable present was left at my house. Since my return, really and literally an instant of time has not been my own: except the hours in which I have sought in vain for sleep, I have passed almost every hour in Westminster Hall and its purlieus. From nine o'clock yesterday morning until past six in the evening, I did not stir from thence. Let this disagreeable employment be my excuse, for not having till now discharged the pleasing duty of making my acknowledgments to you for the great honour you have been pleased to confer upon me, with a promptitude equal to the warmth and sincerity of my gratitude. To have my name united with yours and that of Tacitus, is a distinction to which I am and ever shall be truly sensible.

The value of the gift is to my feelings infinitely enhanced when it comes from a man of talents, virtue, and independent spirit, which seeks for what aspires to be congenial with it, and does not aim to connect itself with greatness, riches, or power.

I thank you for the partial light in which you regard my weak endeavours for the conservation of that ancient order of things in which we were born, and in which we have lived neither unhappily nor disgracefully, and (you at least) not unprofitably to your country. As to me, in truth I can claim nothing more than good intention in the part I have to act. Since I am publicly placed (however little suitably so to my abilities or inclination), I have struggled to the best of my power against two great *public evils*, growing out of the most sacred of all things, liberty and authority. In the writings which you are so indulgent to bear, I have struggled against the tyranny of freedom: in this my longest and last struggle, I contend against the licentiousness of power.—When I retire from this, successful or defeated, your work will either add to my satisfaction, or furnish me with comfort. *Securiorem et uberio rem, materiam senatuti seposui*. I quote the original, as I have not yet had time enough to turn to that part of your translation, where the same thought is certainly not less happily expressed.

I am, with most sincere respect and affection, my dear sir, your most faithful, obliged, and obedient humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

Beaconsfield, Dec. 8, 1793.

I HAVE not been as early as, to all appearance, I ought to have been, in my acknowledgments for your present. I received it in due time ; but my delay was not from a want of a due sense of the value of what you have sent, or of the honour you have done me in sending it. But I have had some visitors to whom I was obliged to attend ; and I have had some business to do, which, though it is not worth your while to be troubled with it, occupied almost every hour of the time I could spare from my guests : until yesterday it was not in my power so much as to open your Tacitus.

I have read the first book through ; besides dipping here and there into other parts. I am extremely delighted with it. You have done what hitherto, I think, has not been done in England : you have given us a translation of a Latin prose writer, which may be read with pleasure. It would be no compliment at all to prefer your translation to the last, which appeared with such a pomp of patronage. Gordon was an author fashionable in his time, but he never wrote any thing worthy of much notice, but that work ; by which he has obtained a kind of eminence in bad writing : so that one cannot pass it by with mere neglect. It is clear to me that he did not understand the language from which he ventured to translate ; and that he had formed a very whimsical idea of excellence with regard to

ours. His work is wholly remote from the genius of the tongue, in its purity, or in any of its jargons. It is not English, nor Irish, nor even his native Scotch. It is not fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring: yours is written with facility and spirit, and you do not often depart from the genuine native idiom of the language. Without attempting, therefore, to modernize terms of art, or to disguise ancient customs under new habits, you have contrived things in such a manner that your readers will find themselves at home. The other translators do not familiarize you with ancient Rome: they carry you into a new world. By their uncouth modes of expression, they prevent you from taking an interest in any of its concerns. In spite of you, they turn your mind from the subject, to attend with disgust to their unskilful manner of treating it: from such authors we can learn nothing. I have always thought the world much obliged to good translators like you. Such are some of the French. They who understand the original are not those who are under the smallest obligations to you; it is a great satisfaction to see the sense of one good author in the language of another. He is thus *alias et idem*. Seeing your author in a new point of view, you become acquainted with him: his thoughts make a new and a deeper impression on the mind. I have always recommended it to young men in their studies, that when they had made themselves thorough masters of a work in the original, then (but not till then) to read it in a translation, if in any modern language a readable translation was to be found. What I say of

your translation is really no more than very cold justice to my sentiments of your great undertaking. I never expected to see so good a translation. I do not pretend that it is wholly free from faults ; but at the same time I think it more easy to discover them than to correct them. There is a style which daily gains ground amongst us, which I should be sorry to see farther advanced by the authority of a writer of your just reputation. The tendency of the mode to which I allude is to establish two very different idioms amongst us, and to introduce a marked distinction between the English that is written and the English that is spoken. This practice, if grown a little more general, would confirm this distemper, such I must think it, in our language, and render it incurable.

From this feigned manner of *falsetto*, as I think the musicians call something of the same sort in singing, no one modern historian, Robertson only excepted, is perfectly free. It is assumed, I know, to give dignity and variety to the style ; but whatever success the attempt may sometimes have, it is always obtained at the expense of purity, and of the graces that are natural and appropriate to our language. It is true, that when the exigence calls for auxiliaries of all sorts, and common language becomes unequal to the demands of extraordinary thoughts, something ought to be conceded to the necessities which make "ambition virtue:" but the allowances to necessities ought not to grow into a practice. Those portents and prodigies ought not to grow too common. If you have here and

there (much more rarely, however, than others of great and not unmerited fame), fallen into an error, which is not that of the dull or careless, you have an author who is himself guilty, in his own tongue, of the same fault, in a very high degree. No author thinks more deeply, or paints more strongly; but he seldom or ever expresses himself naturally. It is plain that, comparing him with Plautus and Terence, or the beautiful fragments of Publius Syrus, he did not write the language of good conversation. Cicero is much nearer to it. Tacitus and the writers of his time have fallen into that vice, by aiming at a poetical style. It is true, that eloquence in both modes of rhetoric is fundamentally the same; but the manner of handling is totally different, even where words and phrases may be transferred from the one of these departments of writing to the other.

I have accepted the licence you have allowed me, and blotted your book in such a manner that I must call for another for my shelves. I wish you would come hither for a day or two. Twenty coaches come almost to our very door. In an hour's conversation we can do more than in twenty sheets of writing. Do come and make us all happy. My affectionate compliments to our worthy doctor. Pray believe me, with the most sincere respect and regard, my dear sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDM. BURKE.

EDMUND BURKE TO DR. F. LAURENCE.

MY DEAR SIR,

[Bath, April, 1797.]

THE very first relaxation of my complaint, which gave me leisure and disposition to attend to what is going on, has filled my mind with many uneasy sensations and many unpleasant reflections. The few of us who have protracted life, to the extreme limits of our short period, have been condemned to see extraordinary things—new systems of policy—new opinions—new principles—and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe that they who lived forty years ago (if the intermediate space of time were expunged from their memory) could hardly credit their senses, when they heard from the highest authority, that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this island: that in the neighbouring island there were at least fourscore thousand more: but, when he should hear of this army, which has not its parallel, what must be his astonishment to hear, that it was kept up for the purpose of an inert and passive defence; that, in its far greater part, it was disabled, by its constitution and very essence, from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke, or any operation of active hostility! What must his reflections be, on hearing that a fleet of five hundred men of war, the best appointed, and to the full as ably commanded, as this country ever had upon the sea, was for the greater part employed in acting upon the same system of unenterprising defence? What must

his sentiments be, who remembers the former energy of England, when he is given to understand that these two islands, with their extensive and every where vulnerable seacoast, should be considered as a garrison sea town? What would he think if the garrison of so strange a fortress should be such as never to make a sally; and that, contrary to all that has been hitherto seen in war, an infinitely inferior army may with safety besiege this garrison, and, without hazarding the life of a man, ruin the garrison and the place, merely by the menaces and false appearances of an attack? What must his surprise be on finding, that with the increases of trade, and balances unknown before, and with less outgoing than at any former time, the public credit should labour, even to the edge of a bankruptcy; and that the confidence of the people in the security of their property should lessen in proportion as all apparent means of their safety are augmented? The last part of this dreadful paradox is to be solved but by one way; and that is by an obscure undefined sense which the people entertain that the apparent means of their safety are not real nor well understood, and that they confide in their government more from their opinion that some sort of government should be supported, than from a conviction that the measures taken by the existing government for the public safety are rational or well adapted to their end. Had it pleased God to continue to me even the late weak remains of my strength, I purposed to make this the subject of a letter, which I intended to address to a brother member of yours, upon the

present state of affairs ; but as I may never be able to finish it, I regard this matter of defence as so much the most important of all considerations at this moment, that it supersedes all concern of my bodily and mental weakness, and urges me, by an impulse I cannot resist, to spend at least my last breath in laying before you some part of the anxious thoughts with which I have been oppressed, and which, more than any bodily distemper, have sunk me to the condition in which you know I am. I have no hand to write, but I am able to dictate from the bed on which I pass my nights and days*.

What I say may have no weight; but it is possible that it may tend to put other men of more ability, and who are in a situation where their abilities may be more useful, into a train of thinking. What I dictate may not be pleasing either to the great or to the multitude; but looking back on my past public life, though not without many faults and errors, I have never made many sacrifices to the favour of the great, or to the humour of the people. I never remember more than two instances in which I have given way to popularity; and those two are the things of which, in the whole course of my life, now at the end of it, I have the most reason to repent. Such has been the habit of my public life, even when individual favour and popular countenance might be plausibly presented to me as the means of doing my duty the more effectually.

* This unfinished letter, which was dictated from his death-bed by Mr. Burke, was one of the last, if not the very last, that he ever wrote.

But now, alas ! of what value to me are all those helps or all those impediments ? When the damp chill sweat of death already begins to glaze our visage, of what moment is it to us whether the vain breath of man blows hot or cold upon it ? But our duties to men are not extinguished with our regard to their opinions. A country which has been dear to us from our birth ought to be dear to us, as from our entrance, so to our final exit from the stage upon which we have been appointed to act ; and in the career of the duties which must in part be enjoyments of our new existence, how can we better start, and from what more proper post, than the performance of those duties which have made the occupations of the first part of the course allotted to us ? *****

MR. CURRAN TO THE REV. HENRY WESTON,
NEWMARKET, COUNTY CORK.

London, 31, Chandos Street, July 10, 1773.

I WOULD have taken a last farewell of my dear Harry from Dublin, if I had not written so shortly before I left it, and, indeed, I was not sorry for being exempt from a task for which a thousand causes conspired to make me at that juncture unqualified. It was not without regret that I could leave a country, which my birth, education, and connexions had rendered dear to me, and venture alone, almost a child of fortune, into a land of strangers. In such moments of despondence, when fancy plays the self-tormentor, she

commonly acquits herself to a miracle, and will not fail to collect in a single group the most hideous forms of anticipated misfortune. I considered myself, besides, as resigning for ever the little indulgences that youth and inexperience may claim for their errors, and passing to a period of life in which the best can scarce escape the rigid severity of censure; nor could the little trivial vanity of taking the reins of my own conduct alleviate the pain of so dear-bought a transition from dependance to liberty. Full of these reflections as I passed the gate, I could not but turn and take a last lingering look of poor Alma-mater; it was the scene of many a boyish folly, and of many a happy hour. I should have felt more confusion at part of the retrospect, had I not been relieved by a recollection of the valuable friendships I had formed there. Though I am far from thinking such a circumstance can justify a passed misconduct, yet I cannot call that time totally a blank, in which one has acquired the greatest blessing of humanity. It was with a melancholy kind of exultation I counted over the number of those I loved there, while my heart gave a sigh to each name in the catalogue; nay, even the *fellows*, whom I never loved, I forgave at that moment; the parting tear blotted out every injury, and I gave them as hearty a benediction as if they had deserved it; as for my general acquaintance (for I could not but go the round), I packed their respective little sighs into one great sigh, as I turned round on my heel. My old friend and handmaid Betty, perceiving me in motion, got her hip under the strong-box,

with my seven shirts, which she had rested against the rails during the delay, and screwed up her face into a most rueful caricature, that might provoke a laugh at another time; while her young son Denny, grasping his waistband in one hand, and a basket of sea provisions in the other, took the lead in the procession, and so we journeyed on to George's Quay, where the ship was just ready to sail. When I entered, I found my fellow passengers seated round a large table in the cabin; we were fourteen in number. A young highland lord had taken the head of the table and the conversation, and with a modesty peculiar to himself, gave a history of his travels, and his intimate connexions with the princes of the empire. An old debauched officer was complaining of the gout, while a woman, who sat next to him (good Heaven! what a tongue!) gave a long detail of what her father suffered from that disorder. To do them all justice, they exerted themselves most zealously for the common entertainment. As for my part, I had nothing to say; nor, if I had, was any one at leisure to listen to me; so I took possession of what the captain called a bed, wondering with Partridge, 'how they could play so many different tunes at the same time without putting each other out.' I was expecting that the seasickness would soon give those restless mouths different employment, but in that I was disappointed; the sea was so calm that one only was sick during the passage, and it was not my good fortune that the lot should fall on that devil who never ceased chattering. There was no cure but patience; accordingly I

never stirred from my tabernacle (unless to visit my basket) till we arrived at Parkgate. Here, after the usual pillage at the custom-house, I laid my box down on the beach, seated myself upon it, and, casting my eyes over the Welsh mountains, I began to reflect on the impossibility of getting back without the precarious assistance of others. "Poor Jack!" thought I, "thou wert never till now so far from home, but thou mightest return on thine own legs. Here now must thou remain, for where here canst thou expect the assistance of a friend?" Whimsical as the idea was, it had power to affect me; until, at length, I was awakened from this reverie by a figure which approached me with the utmost affability; methought his looks seemed to say, 'Why is thy spirit troubled?' He pressed me to go into his house, and to 'eat of his bread,' and to 'drink of his drink.' There was so much good-natured solicitude in the invitation, 'twas irresistible. I rose therefore, and followed him, ashamed of my uncharitable despondence. "Surely," thought I, "there is still humanity left amongst us," as I raised my eyes to the golden letters over his door, that offered entertainment and repose to the wearied traveller. Here I resolved to stay for the night, and agreed for a place in his coach next morning to Chester; but finding my loquacious fellow passenger had agreed for one in the same vehicle, I retracted my bargain, and agreed for my box only; I perceived, however, when I arose next morning, that my box was not sent, though the coach was gone. I was thinking how I should remedy this unlucky disappointment,

when my friendly host told me that he could furnish me with a chaise! Confusion light upon him! what a stroke was this! It was not the few paltry shillings that vexed me, but to have my philanthropy till that moment running cheerly through my veins, and to have the current turned back suddenly by the detection of his knavery. Verily, Yorick, even thy gentle spirit, so meekly accustomed to bear and forbear, would have been roused on such an occasion. I paid hastily for my entertainment, and shaking the dust from my feet at his gate, I marched with my box on my shoulder to a waggoner's at the other end of the town, where I entered it for London, and sallied forth towards Chester on foot. I was so nettled at being the dupe of my own credulity, that I was almost tempted to pass an excommunication on all mankind, and resolved never more to trust my own skill in physiognomy. Wrapt up in my speculations, I never perceived at what a rate I was striding away, till I found myself in the suburbs of Chester, quite out of breath, and completely covered with dust and dirt. From Chester I set out that evening in the stage: I slept about four hours next day at Coventry, and the following evening, at five o'clock, was in view of near a hundred and twenty spires, that are scattered from one side of the horizon to the other, and seem almost bewildered in the mist that perpetually covers this prodigious capital. 'Twould be impossible for description to give any idea of the various objects that fill a stranger, on his first arrival, with surprise and astonishment. The magnificence of the churches, hospitals, and other

public buildings, which every where present themselves, would alone be ample subject of admiration to a spectator, though he were not distracted by the gaudy display of wealth and dissipation continually shifting before his eyes in the most extravagant forms of pride and ostentation, or by a hurry of business that might make you think this the source from which life and motion are conveyed to the world beside. There are many places here not unworthy of particular inspection, but as my illness prevented me from seeing them on my first arrival, I shall suspend my curiosity till some future time, as I am determined to apply to reading this vacation with the utmost diligence, in order to attend the courts next winter with more advantage. If I should happen to visit Ireland next summer, I shall spend a week before I go in seeing the curiosities here (the king and queen, and the lions); and if I continue in my present mood, you will see a strange alteration in your poor friend. That cursed fever brought me down so much, and my spirits are so reduced, that, faith! I don't remember to have laughed these six weeks. Indeed, I never thought solitude could lean so heavily on me as I find it does: I rise, most commonly, in the morning between five and six, and read as much as my eyes will permit me till dinnertime; I then go out and dine, and from that till bedtime I mope about between my lodgings and the park. For Heaven's sake send me some news or other (for surely Newmarket cannot be barren in such things) that will teach me once more to laugh. I never received a single line from any one since I came

here. Tell me if you know any thing about Keller: I wrote twice to that gentleman, without being favoured with any answer. You will give my best respects to Mrs. Aldworth and her family; to doctor Creach's; and don't forget my good friends, Peter and Will Connel.

Yours sincerely,

J. P. C.

P. S.—I will cover this blank edge with entreating you to write closer than you commonly do when you sit down to answer this, and don't make me pay tenpence for a halfpenny worth of white paper.

MR. CURRAN TO ———.

1774.

APJOHN and I arrived in London about eight o'clock on Thursday. When I was set down, and threw myself into a box in the next coffee-house to me, I think I never felt so strangely in my life. The struggle it cost me to leave Ireland, and the pain of leaving it as I did, had been hurried into a sort of numbness by the exertion of such an effort, and a certain exclusion of thought, which is often the consequence of a strong agitation of mind: the hurry also of the journey might in some measure have contributed to soothe for a moment these uneasy sensations. But the exertion was now over, the hurry was past; the barriers between me and reflection now

gave way, and left me to be overwhelmed in the torrent. All the difficulties I had encountered, the happy moments I had lately passed, all now rushed in upon my mind, in melancholy succession, and engrossed the pang in their turn—

Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of chance below,
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow.


At length I roused myself from this mournful reverie, and after writing a few words to Newmarket, set out in search of some of my old acquaintance. I sought them sorrowing, but there was not even one to be found; they had either changed their abodes, or were in the country. How trivial a vexation can wound a mind that is once depressed! Even this little disappointment, though it was of no consequence, though it could not surprise me, yet had the power to afflict me, at least to add to my other mortifications. I could not help being grieved at considering how much more important changes may happen even in a shorter time; how the dearest hopes and most favourite projects of the heart may flourish, and flatter us with gaudy expectations for a moment, and then, suddenly disappearing, leave us to lament over our wretchedness and our credulity. Pleased with the novelty of the world, we fasten eagerly on the bauble, till satiated with enjoyment, or disgusted with disappointment, we resign it with contempt. The world in general follows our example, and we are soon thrown

aside, like baubles, in our turn. And yet, dreary as the prospect is, it is no small consolation to be attached to, and to be assured of the attachment of some worthy affectionate souls, where we may find a friendly refuge from the rigours of our destiny; to have even one congenial bosom on which the poor afflicted spirit may repose, which will feelingly participate our joys or our sorrows, and with equal readiness catch pleasure from our successes, or strive to alleviate the anguish of disappointment.

I this day left my lodgings,—the people were so very unruly that I could stay no longer: I am now at No. 4, in St. Martin's Street, Leicester Fields, not far from my former residence. You will perhaps smile at the weakness, yet I must confess it; never did I feel myself so spiritless, so woe-begone as when I was preparing for the removal. I had settled myself with an expectation of remaining till I should finally depart for Ireland; I was now leaving it before that period, and my spirits sunk into a mixture of peevishness and despondence at the disappointment. I had emptied the desk belonging to the lodgings of my few movables, which I collected in a heap on the floor, and prepared to dispose of in my little trunk. Good Heavens! in how many various ways may the poor human heart be wounded! Is it that even Philosophy cannot so completely plunge her children in the waters of wisdom, that a heel, at least, will not be left vulnerable, and exposed to the danger of an arrow? Is the

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fable equally applicable to the mind as to the body? And is all our firmness and intrepidity founded ultimately on our weakness and our foibles? May all our giant fortitude be so lulled into slumber, as, ere it awakes, to be chained to the ground by a few Lilliputian grievances, and held immovably by such slender fetters? Why else shall we be unaccountably depressed? To leave the friends of my heart, to tear myself from their last affecting farewell, to turn my face to a distant region, separated from them by mountains and oceans and tempests;—to endure all this with something like calmness, and yet to feel pain at changing from one street to another!—Strange inconsistency! and yet so it was. I proceeded very slowly to fill the trunk. I could not please myself in the packing. Some letters now presented themselves; I could not put them in without reading. At length I made an end of the work, and fell into another reverie. I called to mind my first acquaintance with my little trunk; I industriously hunted my memory for every thing that any way related to it, and gave my recollection a great deal of credit for being so successful in making me miserable. At length I got it behind Tom Gess, and saw poor Tom edging forward to avoiding its jolting, and longing to be relieved from its durance. I saw it embark; over how many billows was it wafted from Cork to Bristol, over how many miles from Bristol to London! and how small a portion of that distance must it measure back to-day! And must I be equally slow in my return? With



such sentiments I left Mrs. Turner's, perhaps as completely miserable as any man in London.

As to my amusements, they are very few.— Since I wrote last I went to one play. I commonly spend even more time at home than I can employ in reading of an improving or amusing kind. As I live near the Park, I walk there some time every day. I sometimes find entertainment in visiting the diversity of eating-places with which this place abounds. Here every coal-porter is a politician, and vends his maxims in public with all the importance of a man who thinks he is exerting himself for the public service; he claims the privilege of looking as wise as possible, and of talking as loud, of damning the ministry and abusing the king, with less reserve than he would his own equal. Yet, little as these poor people understand of the liberty they contend so warmly for, or of the measures they rail against, it reconciles one to their absurdity, by considering that they are happy at so small an expense as being ridiculous; and they certainly receive more pleasure from the power of abusing than they would from the reformation of what they condemn. I take the more satisfaction in this kind of company, as while it diverts me it has the additional recommendation of reconciling economy with amusement.

Another portion of time I have set apart every day for thinking of my absent friends. Though this is a duty that does not give much trouble to many, I have been obliged to confine it, or endeavour to confine it within proper bounds: I

have therefore made a resolution to avoid any reflections of this sort, except in their allotted season, that is, immediately after dinner. I am then in a tranquil happy humour, and I increase that happiness by presenting to my fancy those I love in the most advantageous point of view : so that however severely I treat them when they intrude in the morning, I make them ample amends in the evening ; I then assure myself that they are twice as agreeable, and as wise and as good as they really are. * * * * *

I have lately made two acquaintances : one a Frenchman, Dr. Du Garreau ; the other is a German, Mr. Skell, for whom I am indebted to the doctor. With this latter I am not yet much acquainted ; the former is really a man of understanding, and I believe of worth : he is the son of an advocate in Paris, and practised there himself as a physician for some time. He had conceived an affection for a lady with whom the difference of their religion prevented his union at home ; but, alas ! I believe love is of no particular sect,—at least so the lady seemed to think, for she quitted France with him, and took his honour as the security for his adhering to a ceremony performed between them in Holland. After three or four years residence in Amsterdam, where I suppose his practice was not considerable, he brought his wife and child to England last November. She survived the journey but a few weeks, and left the poor man surrounded by every distress. His friends have pressed him to return ; but he is determined at all events to remain in England, rather than carry his daughter to a

country where she would not be considered as legitimate. Rouelle had hinted to me that there was something singular in his fortune, but I did not know the particulars till a few days since, that I breakfasted with him. He had taken his little child on his knee, and after trifling with her for a few moments, burst into tears. Such an emotion could not but excite, as well as justify some share of curiosity. The poor doctor looked as if he were conscious I felt for him, and his heart was too full to conceal its affliction. He kissed his little orphan, as he called her, and then endeavoured to acquaint me with the lamentable detail. It was the hardest story in the world to be told by a man of delicacy. He felt all the difficulties of it; he had many things to palliate, some that wanted to be justified: he seemed fully sensible of this, yet checked himself when he slid into any thing like defence. I could perceive the conflict shifting the colours on his cheek, and I could not but pity him, and admire him for such an embarrassment. Yet, notwithstanding all his distress, he sometimes assumed all the gaiety of a Frenchman, and is a very entertaining fellow. These are the occasions on which we are almost justified in repining at the want of affluence, to relieve such a heart from part of its affliction; surely for such a purpose it is not ambitious to wish for riches.

MR. CURRAN TO ———.

MY DEAR DICK,

1774.

YOUR packet was one of the most seasonable, on every account. As I think I mentioned to you when I should repay this kindness, in my last, I need not repeat it here. I hope you don't expect any news from me; if you did, I would be under the necessity of disappointing you. Unfortunately I have no gratification in seeing high houses or tall steeples, no ear to be ravished by barrel-organs, no public anxiety or private importance by which vanity might lay hold on me, no fine clothes, no abundance of money to recommend me to the deity of pleasure. What then can a poor devil like me either see or hear that is worth communicating to a friend? In truth, I think I am nearly the same I ever was; affecting to look wise, and to talk wise, and exhausting most lavishly on looking and talking the wisdom that a better economist would reserve for acting; and yet, Dick, perhaps this is natural; perhaps we are mistaken when we wonder at finding frugality, or even avarice, on such good terms with affluence, and extravagance inseparable from poverty. In both cases they are effects that flow naturally from their causes. They are the genuine issue of their respective parents; who, to own the truth, cherish and preserve their offspring with a care truly parental, and unfailingly successful. 'Tis just so in wisdom, and on the same principle the man who has but a very small share of wisdom (like him whose purse is

equally shallow), squanders it away on every silly occasion; he thinks it too trifling to be worth hoarding against emergencies of moment; but a very wise man or a very rich man acts in a manner diametrically opposite to this. When the one has ranged his sentiments and marshalled his maxims, and the other computed his tens of thousands, the symmetry of their labours would be destroyed should a single dogma escape to the banners of unwiseness, or a single guinea take its flight to supply an extravagance. Each atom of the aggregate is held fast by its gravitation to the whole mass: hence the fool is prodigal of his little wisdom, and the sixpence departs in peace from the pocket, where it is not troubled with the ceremony of bidding adieu to another. If any chance should make me master of some enormous treasure, I would not despair of finding out its value; and if experience, and the industry of my own folly, should reap a harvest of prudence, I will make you wonder at my care in drying it for use. I will regale myself in my old age with the spirit of it, and dispense the small tea to those who may have occasion for it.

MR. CURRAN TO ———.

Dieppe, Friday, August 31, 1787.

My last from Brighton told you I was setting sail,—I did so about eight o'clock yesterday evening, and, after a pleasant voyage, landed here this day at twelve. To-morrow I set out

for Rouen, where I shall probably remain two or three days.

I cannot say the first view of France has made a very favourable impression on me. I am now writing in the best lodging-room in the best inn in Dieppe, l'Hôtel de la Ville de Londres.—Monsieur de la Rue, the host, danced up to me on board the packet, did every thing I wanted, and offered a thousand services that I had no occasion for. I mounted to my present apartment by a flight of very awkward stairs, the steps some of bricks, some of wood, but most of both. The room contains two old fantastical chests of drawers,—a table, on which I now write,—four chairs, with cane backs and bottoms,—and a bed, five feet from the bricks that compose the floor (the first floor); the walls half covered with lime and half with a miserable tapestry. I dined very well, however, on a small fish like a trout, a beef steak, and a bottle of Burgundy, which the maid that attended me would not admit to be “chevalier.”

I then walked out to see the town, and, God knows, a sad sight it is: it seems to have been once better, but it is now strength fallen into ruin, and finery sunk into decay. It smote me with a natural sentiment of the mortality of human things; and I was led by an easy transition to inquire for the churches. I inquired of a decent looking man, who sat at a door knitting stockings, and he with great civility stopped his needles, and directed me to the church of St. Jacques, having first told me how fine it was, and how many years it was built. It has a profusion

of sculpture in it, and I suspect not of the best kind ; however, the solemnity of the whole made amends, and indeed I think well might, for that deficiency, to me who am so little a connoisseur in the matter. I could not but respect the disinterestedness and piety of our ancestors, who laboured so much to teach posterity the mortality of man ; and yet, on turning the idea a little, I could not but suspect that the vainglory of the builders of pyramids and temples was no small incentive to their labours : why else engrave the lesson of mortality in characters intended to endure for ever, and thus become an exception to the rule they would establish ? But I am turning preacher instead of traveller.

I reserved the view of the inhabitants for the last. Every nation, 'tis said, has a peculiar feature. I trust poor France shall not be judged of in that point by Dieppe. I had expected to see something odd on my arrival, but I own I was unprepared for what I met ; the day was warm, and perhaps the better sort of people were all within. Many hundreds were busy on the quays and streets,—but any thing so squalid, so dirty ; and so ugly I really never saw. At some little distance I mistook the women for sailors, with long boddices, and petticoats not completely covering their knees, which I really took for trowsers ; however, on a nearer view, I saw their heads covered with linen caps, their beards unshaved, and perceived they wore slippers with rather high heels ; by which, notwithstanding the robust shape of their legs, and their unusual

strut, I ascertained their sex sufficiently for a traveller.

I may say truly, I did not see a being this day between the age of fifteen and fifty. I own I was therefore surprised to find that there were children, for such I found to be a parcel of strange little figures; the female ones with velvet hoods, and the males with their little curled heads covered with woollen nightcaps, regardless of the example of their hardy old fathers, if they were not their grandsires, who carried about heads without a hair or a hat to protect them.

In truth, I am at a loss to reconcile so many contradictions as I have met with here even in a few hours. Even though I should not mention the height of their beds, nor the unwieldiness of their carriages, as if the benefit of rest was reserved for vaulters and rope-dancers, and the indolent and helpless only were intended to change their place; but perhaps these impressions are only the first and the mistaken views of a traveller, that ought to see more and reflect more before he forms his opinions. I believe so too, and, if I change or correct them, the French nation shall have the benefit of my change of opinion. If not, I hope my mistake will not do much injury to the power, or riches, or vanity of his most Christian Majesty. Yours ever,

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO ———.

Helvoetsluys, August 1, 1788.

Just landed after a voyage of forty-two hours, having left Harwich, Wednesday, at six in the evening. We are just setting out in a treckschuit for Rotterdam.

I can say little, even if I had time, of the first impression that Holland makes on a traveller. The country seems as if it were swimming for its life, so miserably low does it appear; and from the little I have seen of its inhabitants, I should not feel myself interested in the event of the struggle. We were obliged to put up an orange cockade on our entrance. We have just dined, and I am so disturbed by the settling of the bill, and the disputes about guilders and stivers, &c. that I must conclude. Yours ever,

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO ———.

Amsterdam, August 5, 1788.

You can't expect to find much entertainment in any letter from Holland. The subject must naturally be as flat as the country, in which, literally, there is not a single eminence three inches above the level of the water, the greater part lying much below it. We met Mr. Hannay, a Scotchman, on the passage, who had set out on a similar errand. We joined accordingly. A few moments after my letter from Helvoetsluys

was written, we set out in a treckschuit for Rotterdam, where, after a voyage of twenty-four hours easy sail, we arrived without any accident, notwithstanding some struggle between an adverse wind and the horse that drew us. We stayed there only one day, and next day set out for the Hague, a most beautiful village, the seat of the prince of Orange, and the residence of most of the principal Dutch. Yesterday we left it, and on going aboard found four inhabitants of Rouen, and acquaintances of my old friend Du Pont. We were extremely amused with one of them, a little thing about four feet long, and for the first time in his life a traveller. He admired the abundance of the waters, the beauty of the windmills, and the great opulence of Holland, which he thought easy to be accounted for, considering that strangers paid a penny a mile for travelling, which was double what a French gentleman was obliged to pay at home ; nor could it otherwise be possible for so many individuals to indulge in the splendour of so many country villas as we saw ranged along the banks of the canals, almost every one of which had a garden and a menagerie annexed to it. The idea of the menagerie he caught at the instant from a large poultry coop, which he espied at the front of one of those little boxes, and which contained half a dozen of turkeys and as many hens.

The evening, yesterday, brought us to Amsterdam. We had an interpreter who spoke no language. We knew not, under Heaven, where to go ; spoke in vain to every fellow passenger, but got nothing in return but Dutch ; among the rest

to a person in whom, notwithstanding the smoke, I thought I saw something of English. At length he came up to me, and said he could hold out no longer. He directed us to an inn; said he sometimes amused himself with concealing his country, and that once at Rotterdam he carried on the joke for five days, to the great annoyance of some unfortunate Englishmen, who knew nobody, and dined every day at the table d'hôte he frequented. Last night we saw a French comedy and opera tolerably performed. This day we spent in viewing the port, stadt-house, &c. and shall depart to-morrow for Rotterdam or Utrecht, on our way to Antwerp.

You cannot expect much observation from a visiter of a day: the impression however, of a stranger cannot be favourable to the people.—They have a strange appearance of the cleanliness for which they are famous, and of the dirt that makes it necessary: their outsides only have I seen, and I am satisfied abundantly with that. Never shall I wish to return to a country, that is at best dreary and unhealthy, and is no longer the seat of freedom; yet of its arbitrariness I have felt nothing more than the necessity of wearing an orange riband in my hat. My next will be from Spa, where I shall hope to be in six or seven days: till then farewell. Yours ever,

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO HIS SON, RICHARD CURRAN.

DEAR RICHARD,

Paris, October 5, 1802.

HERE I am, after having lingered six or seven days very unnecessarily in London. I don't know that even the few days that I can spend here will not be enough—sickness, long and gloomy—convalescence, disturbed by various paroxysms—relapse confirmed—the last a spectacle soon seen and painfully dwelt upon. I shall stay here yet a few days. There are some to whom I have introductions that I have not seen. I don't suppose I shall get myself presented to the consul. Not having been privately baptized at St. James's would be a difficulty; to get over it a favour; and then the trouble of getting one's self costumed for the show; and then the small value of being driven, like the beasts of the field before Adam when he named them;—I think I sha'n't mind it. The character of this place is wonderfully different from that of London. I think I can say, without affectation, that I miss the frivolous elegance of the old times before the revolution, and that in the place of it I see a squalid beard-grown, vulgar vivacity; but still it is vivacity, infinitely preferable to the frozen and awkward sulk that I have left. Here they certainly wish to be happy, and think that by being merry they are so. I dined yesterday with Mr. Fox, and went in the evening to Tivoli, a great, planted, illuminated garden, where all the *bourgeoisie* of Paris, and some of a better description, went to see a balloon go up. The aeronaut

was to have ascended with a smart girl, his *bonne amie*; for some reason that I know not, some one went up in her place; she was extremely mortified; the balloon rose, diminished, vanished into night; no one could guess what might be its fate, and the poor dear one danced the whole evening to shake off her melancholy.

I am glad I am come here. I entertained many ideas of it, which I have entirely given up, or very much indeed altered. Never was there a scene that could furnish more to the weeping or the grinning philosopher; they might well agree that human affairs were a *sad joke*. I see it every where and in every thing. The wheel has run a complete round; only changed some spokes and a few "felloes," very little for the better, but the axle certainly has not rusted—nor do I see any likelihood of its rusting. At present all is quiet except the tongue, thanks to those invaluable protectors of peace—the army!! At Tivoli last night we had at least a hundred soldiers, with fixed bayonets. The consul now *lives* at St. Cloud, in a magnificence, solitary, but still fitting his marvellous fortune. He is very rarely seen—he travels by night—is indefatigable—has no favourite, &c.

As to the little affairs at the Priory*, I can scarcely condescend, after a walk in the Louvre, amid the spirit of those arts which were inspired by freedom, and have been transmitted to power, to think of so poor a subject. I hope to get a letter from you in London, at Osborne's, Adelphi. Many of the Irish are here,—not of consequence

* Mr. Curran's country seat, near Dublin.

to be in danger: I have merely heard of them. Yesterday I met Arthur O'Connor in the street, with Lord and Lady Oxford. Her ladyship very kindly pressed me to dine; but I was engaged. I had bargained for a cabriolet, to go and see my poor gossip. Set out at two: at the end of five miles found I was totally misdirected—returned to St. Denys—got a miserable dinner, and was fleeced as usual. I had some vengeance of the rascal, however, by deploring the misery of a country where a stranger had nothing for his dinner but a bill. You feel a mistake in chronology in the two “yesterdays;” but, in fact, part of this was written yesterday, and the latter part now. I need not desire you to bid any one remember me; but tell them I remember them.—Say how Eliza does. Tell Amelia and Sarah I do not forget them. God bless you all.

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO LEONARD M'NALLY, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

Godwin's, 41, Skinner Street, London.

DEAR MAC,

I GOT the cover yesterday, thinking to write a very long wise letter to you; now, I have only the few moments that G.'s griskin takes to be burnt. Poor Tooke is, I fear, at his last. A singular man! One glory he has eminently—he has been highly valued by many good men of his day, and persecuted by almost every scoundrel that united the power with the will to do

so. His talents were of the first stamp, his intellect most clear, his attachment to England, I think, inflexible, his integrity not to be seduced, and his personal courage not to be shaken. If this shall be admitted, he has lived long enough ; and if it is not, he has lived too long.

My health is much better ; my breast quite free, the pain gone, my appetite rather better, sleep not so profound, spirits flutter, temper more even —altogether some gainer by the reduction of wine. At your side, I understand, my good friends have Sangradoed me, but I have taken only the water—no bleeding for me. I have written to Amelia ; that may save you some three pages, which might be blank and written at the same time. I would beg a line, but I shall have set out too soon to get it. No news here, but what the papers give you ; they are all mad about the convention : I differ from them totally, as I feel a disposition to do on every subject.

I am glad to hear you are letting yourself out at Old Orchard ; you are certainly unwise in giving up such an inducement to exercise, and the absolute good of being so often in good air. I have been talking about your habit without naming yourself. I am more persuaded that you and Egan are not sufficiently afraid of weak liquors. I can say, from trial, how little pains it costs to correct a bad habit. On the contrary, poor nature, like an ill used mistress, is delighted with the return of our kindness, and is anxious to show her gratitude for the return, by letting us see how well she becomes it.

I am the more solicitous upon this point from

having made this change, which I see will make me waited for in heaven longer than perhaps they looked for. If you do not make some pretext for lingering, you can have no chance of conveying me to the wherry; and the truth is, I do not like surviving old friends. I am somewhat inclined to wish for posthumous reputation; and if you go before me, I shall lose one of the most irreplaceable of my trumpeters: therefore, dear Mac, no more water, and keep the other element—your wind, for the benefit of your friends. I will show my gratitude as well as I can, by saying handsome things of you to the saints and angels before you come. Best regards to all with you.

Yours, &c.

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO P. LESLIE, ESQ. DUBLIN.

DEAR PETER,

Cheltenham, Sept. 11, 1811.

DON'T open this till the little circle of our Irish friends are together. You will all be glad to hear that an old friend is yet in the harbour of this stormy world, and has not forgotten you: in truth, it is only that sentiment which troubles you with this worthless dispatch; but small as its value may be, it is worth at least what it costs you. I don't think these waters are doing me any good,—I think they never did; they bury my poor spirits in the earth. I consulted yesterday evening (indeed chiefly to put so many moments to a technical death) our countryman B., a very obstinate fellow: though I paid him for his

affability, and his "indeed I think so too, Mr. Shandy," I could not work him into an admission that I had any malady whatsoever, nor even any to hope for by continuing the intrigue with Mrs. Forty*; so I have a notion of striking my tent, and taking a position behind the Trent, at Donnington†. During my stay here I have fallen into some pleasant female society; but such society can be enjoyed only by those who are something at a tea table or a ball. Tea always makes me sleepless; and as to dancing, I tried three or four steps that were quite the cream of the thing in France at one time, and which cost me something. I thought it might be the gaiters that gave them a piperly air; but even after putting on my black silk stockings, and perusing them again before the glass, which I put on the ground for the purpose of an exact review, I found the edition was too stale for republication.

The cover of this contains a list of all the politicians met at Cheltenham, and therefore you must see that I am out of work as well for my head as my heels. Even the newspapers seem so parched by the heat of the season, which is extreme, as to have lost all vegetation. In short, I have made no progress in any thing except in marketing, and I fancy I can cast a glance upon a shoulder of Welsh mutton with all the careless indecision of an unresolved purchaser, and yet with the eye of a master; so I have contrived to have two or three at five o'clock, except when I dine abroad, which I don't much like to do.

* The person who dispensed the waters at Cheltenham.

† Lord Moira's seat.

If you remember our last political speculations, you know all that is to be known; and that all being just nothing, you cannot well forget it. The smoke is thickest at the corners farthest from the chimney, and therefore near the fire we see a little more distinctly; but as things appear to me, I see not a single ticket in the wheel that may not be drawn a blank, poor Paddy's not excepted. To go back to the fire—each party has the bellows hard at work, but I strongly suspect that each of them does more to blind their rivals, and themselves too, by blowing the ashes about, than they do in coaxing or cherishing the blaze for the comfort or benefit of their own shins. Therefore, my dear Peter, though we have not the gift of prophecy, we have at least the privilege of praying. There is no act of parliament that takes away the right of preferring a petition to Heaven; and therefore, while it is yet lawful, I pray that all may end well, and that we may have a happy escape from knaves and fools. In that hope there is nothing either popish or seditious. To-morrow I go to Gloucester, to the music meeting, and then I think Mrs. Forty and I shall take the embrace of an eternal adieu. Do not forget me to all our dear friends about you, and assure them that, however kindly they may remember me, I am not, as far as grateful recollection can go, in their debt. God grant we may all meet again in comfort here, or in glory somewhere else.

Yours, dear Peter, very truly yours,

JOHN P. CURRAN.

MR. CURRAN TO R. HETHERINGTON, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

DEAR DICK,

London, 1811.

I WRITE merely to say that I am alive. Never any thing so dull as this place ; I shall soon steer towards you. You must know, I have been requested by a great sculptor to sit for him, and we are now employed in making a most beautiful head in mud, which is to be the model for a piece of immortal Parian marble. Is that a small style of going, Dick ? Wellington has been obliged to give up Rodrigo, and retire westward ; I suppose, to eat his Christmas pies at his old quarters in Torres Vedras, to which every hundred pounds that is sent to him costs only one hundred and forty pounds here. As to politics, they seem quite relinquished by every one : nobody expects any material change of men or measures ; nor, in truth, do I see any thing in the present state of things that can't be done as well by one set as another. I have little doubt that Perceval is as warlike a hero as Grenville, and just as capable of simplifying our government to the hangman and the tax gatherer. I am just interrupted ; so, God bless you.

J. P. CURRAN.

MR. CURRAN TO R. HETHERINGTON, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

DEAR DICK,

Holland House, 1811.

THE allurements of a frank gives you this. Here I am, much better, I think,—all lonely. Burton here for a week—almost every body else away. I am scarcely sorry for having come, one gets out of print; however, I have scarcely to complain, I find myself quite a proof copy. Dear Dick, a man loves to be cockered a little; and certainly I am not stinted here. I suspect it is all affectation when I talk cheaply of the great and the grand; for instance, I went to pay my devoirs to Lady D——, who was very kind; also to Lady A——, who was vastly gracious; also Godwin, as also Lord Holland. To-morrow I shall think of Denis O'Bryen and the Duke of Sussex; 'twill be well if I don't forget you and the hill, while I remember

J. P. C.

Some more lies from the continent:—another victory—three legs of Bonaparte shot away, the fourth foot very precarious. I really suspect that you have been here *incog.* and bit every body; for they will believe nothing, even though authenticated by the most respectable letters from Gottingen. Farewell.

J. P. CURRAN.

MR. CURRAN TO R. HETHERINGTON, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

DEAR DICK,

London, October 12, 1811.

I LOOK forward to being very domestic for the winter. I feel my habits and feelings much upon the change ; it puts me in mind of a couple of bad verses of my own growth,—

And the long train of joys that charm'd before,
Stripp'd of their borrow'd plumage, charm no more.

I am weak enough to indulge in a conceited contrition for having done nothing, and the penitential purpose of doing something before I die.— God help us ! how poor the vanity that self accuses us of wasting funds that never existed, and draws for compensation upon the time that we are not destined to see ! or upon efforts that we have not strength to make ! You will think it odd that here in London I should be very studious ; but so it has been. I have been always prone to metaphysical and theological subjects, though I well know the uncertainty and fruitlessness of such researches ; however, I think to call another cause, and adjourn that, till I go thither where all must be plain and clear—where the evidence must be solid, and the judgment infallible.

I have been only at one play, and that in company with the author—Moore. I sleep three or four nights in the week in the country ; so that in Ireland I look to be very good,—like an old bachelor who proposes to marry, and take the benefit of an insolvent act.

There is still no news here—people seem al-

most sick of conjecturing. As to my part, if I have any opinion, it is that a change would be only partial. The public undoubtedly have no enthusiasm for the outs, and Perceval, unquestionably, has risen much. In the city, they think him a man of probity and of business, which they think much better than high and lofty tumbling. As to our miserable questions, they are not half so interesting as the broils in the Caraccas. What a test of the Union! And what a proof of the apathy of this blind and insolent country! They affect to think it glorious to struggle to the last shilling of their money, and the last drop of our blood, rather than submit their property and persons to the capricious will of France; and yet that is precisely the power they are exercising over us,—the modest authority of sending over to us laws, like boots and shoes ready made for exportation, without condescending once to take our measure, or ask whether or where they pinch us. But enough, I think, of religion and politics.

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO R. HETHERINGTON, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

DEAR DICK, Cheltenham, September 3, 1813.
You ought to have heard from me before; I have been a truant; however in fact I had little to say: I am here now ten days. I took the waters; as usual, they bore down whatever spirits I had to lose. Yesterday, I went to the doctor; he told me I had taken them wrong, and was wrong

in taking them; that I had no symptom of any disease whatever: he mentioned also, in confidence, that notice had been taken of my intimacy with Mrs. Forty; that there were some ladies not far from the well, strangers altogether to my poor dear, in whom religion had turned from milk, and soured into vinegar; who had little hope of being talked ill of themselves, and who made it a moral duty to slide themselves in upon the market-jury of every character, and give a verdict against them upon their own knowledge; particularly if there were any circumstance that made it an act of common mercy, in those canthers of slanderous litanies, to be silent or merciful.—“My dear sir,” said he, “let not women complain of their injuries from men, when they are such odious beasts in devouring one another.”—In truth, my dear Dick, it is frightful to see how little they can spare their friends, when they can make them the pretexts for venting their infernal malice. I confess it has added to my sickness of heart against that country*, of which I have really deserved so much.

You can scarcely believe what a difference I find here—courted and cherished by strangers; I assure you the question of celebrity between the royal tiger and me is not quite decided. The change of scene is amusing, so is the diversity of characters; there is a moral benefit in the change of scene; you look back to the niche you filled, and you see it not: how minute then must be the little thing that filled it! Here too every body is as intimate with me as I permit. I really be-

* Ireland: the censorious ladies in question were his country women.

gin to think that the best tenure of earthly attachment is tenantry at will. You have the use of the soil, and the way-going crop; then nothing you plant shoots so deeply but you may remove it without injury to the soil or to itself. If affections strike their roots far into the heart, they cannot be pulled up without laceration and blood. I am not without an idea of cutting you altogether: I could easily get into parliament, and on my own terms, but the object would not justify a purchase; and I need not tell you, I would not submit to restrictions.

You will be surprised when I tell you, that I have the highest authority for knowing that the silly malice of the Castle has not had the smallest impression on a certain high quarter. As I have jilted Mrs. Forty, my head is getting better, and I shall try and write. I may as well stay here some time as any where else: I am afraid of London; however, I can't but pay a visit to the Duke of Sussex. Will you enclose "*Wagram**" to Mr. Reeves, and add my respects, and request that he will have the goodness to forward it to me to Cheltenham. The post is just going out, —write to me by return: best regards to the hill. I begin to think that "*compliments to all inquiring friends*" generally dwindles into a sinecure. What of the poor Priory? We have passed some happy and innocent days there. God bless you, dear Dick, prays very sincerely yours,

J. P. C.

P. S. These senators are in bed, or this should pass more free than I have ever been able to do.

* Lines, composed by Mr. Curran.

MR. CURRAN TO R. HETHERINGTON, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

DEAR DICK,

My last was in spleen and haste ; this is a post-script. I can scarcely add what I should have said, because I forget what I did say : no doubt I was too vain not to brag of the civility I have met, and consequently of the good taste of every body. Did I say anything of the Italian countess, or the French count her uncle, whose legs and thighs are turned into grasshopper springs by a canister-shot at the battle of Novi ? She talks of going westward ; as Irish scandal does not talk Italian, and as she can't speak English, she may be safe enough, particularly with the assistance of a Venetian blind ! Dear Dick, God help us ! I find I am recovering fast from the waters ; I think I'll drink no more of them ; my nerves are much more composed, and my spirits, though far from good, are more quiet. Why may not the wretch of to-morrow be happy to-day ? I am not much inclined to abstract optimism, but I often think Pope was right when he said, that " whatever is, is right," though he was perhaps too shallow a moralist to know, not why he thought so, but why he said so ; probably 'twas like your own poetry, he made the ends of the lines jingle for the sake of the rhyme.

Apropos of jingle. I forgot, I believe, to beg of you to send me two copies of " Oh Sleep ! " I

wrote it for Braham. I suppose the air not correct.

Did I beg of you to see and to direct James as to the erections at the barn? don't forget it; because, perhaps, I may see the Priory once again. I dreamt last night of your four-horse stable, and was glad to find all well.

You can scarcely believe what a good humour-ed compromise I am coming into with human malice, and folly, and unfixedness. By reducing my estimate of myself, every collateral circumstance sets out modestly on the journey of humility and good sense, from the sign of the Colossus to that of the Pigmy, where the apartments are large and ample for the lodger and his train.

Just as before, the post is on my heels,—Richard has only time to put this in the office. I shall probably soon write more at leisure.—Compliments at the hill: ditto repeated *shaking the bottle*.

J. P. C.

The Scotch indorser of this gave me my dinner yesterday;—champagne and soda. He votes with the minister. I gave a lecture, and got glory for rebuking a silly fellow, that tried to sing an improper song in the presence of his son, "Thunders of applause."

MR. CURRAN TO R. HETHERINGTON, ESQ.
DUBLIN.

DEAR DICK,

Cheltenham.

I HAVE not been well here—these old blue devils, I fear, have got a lease of me. I wonder the more at it, because I have been in a constant round of very kind and pleasant society. Tomorrow Sir Frederick Falkener and I set out for London. I don't turn my face to the metropolis *con amore*, but the Duke of Sussex might not take it well if I did not call upon him—so I go, being at once an humble friend and a patriot. Low as I have been myself in spirits, I could not but be attracted with the style of society and conversation here, particularly the talents and acquirements of females,—I am sorry to say, few of them our country women. The vulgarity, too, and forwardness of some of our heroes quite terrible. On the whole, however, perhaps, I am the better for the jaunt.

MR. CURRAN TO D. LUBE, ESQ. DUBLIN.

DEAR LUBE,

London, 1814.

As I sit down to write, I am broken in upon. In sooth, I had little to say;—the mere sending this is full proof that I have escaped being supped upon by Jones's landlord, or any of his subjects. I sailed Wednesday night, and arrived here at half past six this morning, soured and sad. Kings and generals are as cheap as dirt, and yet so much

more valuable a thing as lodging as dear as two eggs a penny. Saturday, not being a day of business in the house, I met nobody; though I did not go to bed on my arrival. The little I have heard confirms the idea you know I entertained of the flatness of a certain political project; it could not pass unopposed, and in such a conflict, the expenditure of money to make a voter a knave, that you might be an honest senator, would, in such a swarm of locusts, surpass all calculation. However, I know nothing distinctly as yet, therefore I merely persevere in the notion I stated to you.

I have just seen the immortal Blucher. The gentlemen and ladies of the mob huzza him out of his den, like a wild beast to his offal; and this is repeated every quarter of an hour, to their great delight, and for aught appears, not at all to his dissatisfaction. I am now going to dine with a friend, before whose house the illustrious monarchs proceed to their surfeit at Guildhall. No doubt we shall have the newspapers in a state of eructation for at least a week. But I must close.

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO D. LUBE, ESQ. DUBLIN.

MY DEAR LUBE,

London, June, 1814.

I AM not many days in London; yet am I as sick of it as ever I was of myself. No doubt it is not a favourable moment for society; politics spoil every thing; it is a perpetual tissue of

plots, cabals, low anxiety, and disappointment. Every thing I see disgusts and depresses me : I look back at the streaming of blood for so many years ; and every thing every where relapsed into its former degradation. France regained,—Spain again saddled for the priests,—and Ireland, like a bastinadoed elephant, kneeling to receive the paltry rider : and what makes the idea more cutting, her fate the work of her own ignorance and fury. She has completely lost all sympathy here, and I see no prospect for her, except a vindictive oppression and an endlessly increasing taxation. God give us, not happiness, but patience !

I have fixed to set out for Paris on Tuesday with Mr. W. He is a clever man—pleasant, informed, up to every thing, can discount the bad spirits of a friend, and has undertaken all trouble. I don't go for society, it is a mere name ; but the thing is to be found nowhere, even in this chilly region. I question if it is much better in Paris. Here the parade is gross, and cold, and vulgar ; there it is, no doubt, more flippant, and the attitude more graceful ; but in either place is not society equally a tyrant and a slave ? The judgment despises it, and the heart renounces it. We seek it because we are idle—we are idle because we are silly ; the natural remedy is some social intercourse, of which a few drops would restore ; but we swallow the whole phial, and are sicker of the remedy than we were of the disease. We do not reflect that the variety of converse is found only with a very few, selected by our regard, and is ever lost in a promiscuous rabble, in whom we

cannot have any real interest, and where all is monotony. We have had it sometimes at the Priory, notwithstanding the bias of the ball that still made it roll to a particular side. I have enjoyed it, not long since, for a few hours in a week with as small a number, where too there was no smartness, no wit, no pretty affectation, no repartee; but where the heart will talk, the tongue may be silent,—a look will be a sentence, and the shortest phrase a volume. No; be assured, if the fancy is not led astray, it is only in the *coterie* that the thirst of the animal being can be slaked, or the pure luxury and anodyne of his life be found. He is endeared and exalted by being surpassed; he cannot be jealous of the wealth, however greater than his, which is expended for his pleasure, and which, in fact, he feels to be his own. As well might an alderman become jealous of the calapash in which his soul delights before the Lord. But we are for ever mistaking the plumage for the bird: perhaps we are justly punished by seeking happiness where it is not given by nature to find it. Eight or ten lines back I looked at my watch; I saw 'twas half past six, the hour at which dinner, with a *friend or two*, was to be precisely on the table. I went—was presented to half a dozen dial plates that I never saw before, and that looked as if they had never told the hour of the day. I sat gagged—stayed twenty minutes—came back to write, leaving Richard to bring me word if, between this and to-morrow, the miserable mess shall be flung into the trough. How complete a picture this of glare without worth, and attitude

without action,—“My temper,” to quote myself, “and my dinner lost.” Can it have been the serious intention of Providence that affectation should obtain these triumphs over sense and comfort? and yet really my host is a very good fellow in the main.

’Tis now half past seven—no Richard. I had just put on my hat to go to the next coffeehouse, but I resolved to punish myself for the petty peevishness of being angry, because every one has not as much good sense as I think I have myself. I am now wishing that there may be no dinner till ten, that I may have the glory of self punishment,—

Judico me cremari,

in continuation,—

Et combustus fui *.

We sat down at eight, sixteen strong, but it had nothing of a *coterie*. I sat next a pleasantish sort of a lady; but alas! a look of attention is not

* Mr. Curran alludes to an anecdote related by Sir William Blackstone, in one of the notes to his Commentaries. In the reign of Henry the Sixth, the Chancellor of Oxford claimed the right of trying an action brought against himself; upon which occasion his counsel, Serjeant Rolfe, introduced the following curious argument in support of the claim:—*Jeo vous dirai un fable. En aucun temps fuit un pape et avoit fait un grand offence, et le cardinals vindrent a luy et disoyent a luy “peccasti.” et il dit, “judica me:” et ils disoyent “non possumus quia caput et ecclesie; judica teipsum:” et l’apostol dit “judico me cremari,” et fuit combustus; et apres fuit un saint. Et in eo cas il fuit son juge demene, et issint n’est pas inconvenient que un home soit juge demene.*—Blackst. Com. book iii. p. 299, note.

a look of affiance : there are graciousnesses that neither identify nor attract ; and as to the atmosphere that sported on her dimples, I would just as soon have had a thimbleful of common air. After all, how rare the coincidences that conciliate affection and exclusive confidence!—how precarious !

For either

He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake ;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain.

Or if she love, withheld
By parents, or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame!

Milton, you see, with all his rigour, was not insensible of these *lachrymæ rerum*. There is one thing that ought to make us humble and patient. When we are close enough for the inspection of others, we soon find that “life is eternal war with woe.” Many, too, are doomed to “suffer alone ;” and, after all, would not a truly generous nature prefer the monopoly of its own ills rather than fling any part of them upon a kindred bosom ?

You ask me about politics. Regarding myself, my answer is—I had no object in parliament except the catholic question, and that I fear is gone. Westminster will probably be a race of bribery, equally disgraceful and precarious*. Burdett's

* It was expected at this time that there would shortly be a vacancy in the representation for Westminster; in which event Mr. Curran had been encouraged to offer himself as a candidate, but he never entered warmly into the scheme, though he adverts to it in several letters.

conduct has been quite that of a friend and a man; he would have been most ardent, and what was to me most grateful, on a public ground. I dined with him yesterday; at first the party was numerous—the masquerade, about ten, drained them down to three, my *compagnon de voyage* and myself; till one it was quite a *coterie*, with no wine; there's no playing on an instrument with many strings; half of them form only base accompaniments.

I thought to have gone *incog.* to Paris, but my excellent friend, the Duke of Sussex, insisted on my taking a letter to Monsieur:—

So now cocked hats, and swords, and laces,
And servile bows, and low grimaces;
For what at court the lore of Pascal
Weigh'd 'gainst the crouchings of a rascal?

As to my stay there, every where is to me no where; therefore, if it depends on me, I shall drop off when I'm full, or Mr. W. will haul me along. If our friends have any wish, it ought to decide, and shall do so. I cannot endure to be conscious of any retaliating sulk in myself; and I know that Heaven loveth the cheerful giver. Yours, &c.

J. P. C.

MR. CURRAN TO D. LUBE, ESQ. DUBLIN.

DEAR L.

Paris, August 3, 1814.

I RECEIVED your kind letter, and thank you for it; "levius fit," &c. When I came here, I intended to have scribbled some little journal of what I met. I am now sorry I did not. Things

so soon become familiar, and appear not worth notice; besides, I have not been well since I came here. If I had written, and sent it to you, it would have been a tissue of astonishment, or affliction, or disgust. I see clearly I am likely to be drummed out of this sad world. I fear war will soon unfold her tattered banners on the continent. This poor country is in a deplorable state—a ruined noblesse, a famished clergy, a depopulated nation, a state of smothered war between the upstarts and the restored; their finances most distressed; the military spirits divided; the most opposite opinions as to the lasting of the present form of things—every thing unhinged: yet I really sympathize with this worried, amiable, and perhaps contemptible people; so full of talent and of vice, so frivolous, so inconstant and prone to change, so ferocious too in their fickleness; about six revolutions within twenty years, and as fresh as ever for a new dance. These strange vicissitudes of man draw tears, but they also teach wisdom. These awful reverses make one ashamed of being engrossed by mere self, and examining a louse through a microscope, “complain of grief, complain thou art a man.”

I never so completely found my mind a magic lantern; such a rapid succession of disjointed images! the past, the present, the future possible. One ought not to be hasty in taking up bad impressions, and I need not say that three weeks can give but little room for exact observation; but from what I do see, and learn from others who have seen long and deeply, I have conceived the worst of social Paris. Every thing on the

surface is abominable ; beastlinesses that even with us do not exist ; they actually seem in talk and in practice to cultivate a familiarity with nastiness. In every public place they are spitting on your shoes, in your plate, almost in your mouth. Such community of secretions, with, I think, scarcely an exception, is not to be borne. Then the contrast makes it worse—gaudiness more striking by filth : the splendid palace for the ruler, the hovels and the sink for the ruled ; the fine box for the despot, the pigeon-holes for the people ; and it strikes me with sadness, that the women can be little more than the figurantes, much more the property, and that a very abused property, than the proprietors ; receiving a mock reverence, merely to carry on the drama, but neither cherished nor respected. What a reflection, if, as I fear, it is true that the better half of the species (for such I really think them, when fitly placed) should be sacrificed ! How vile the feeling and the taste that can degrade them from being the real directors and mistresses of man, to be the mere *soubrettes* of society, gilded and smart, and dexterous and vicious, giving up all that exalts and endears them in their proper characters of wives and friends, and partners in good and consolers in adverse fortunes ! Even before the revolution, manners were bad enough, but many causes since have rubbed off the gilding : the banishment of the nobles, the succession of low men to power, and, more than all, the elevation of plebeian soldiers to high rank, promoting of course their trulls to a station where manners and morals were under their influence ;

and this added to the horrible example set by Buonaparte himself in his own interior, putting every thing honest and sacred out of countenance and out of fashion. Add to this, what must have sent down the contagion to the lower orders—the conscription: the wretched men marrying without preference, merely to avoid the army, and then running into that army to escape from their ill chosen partners; all these causes must have conspired to make a frightful carnage in manners and morals too. In short, I am persuaded that a single monster has done more to demoralize and uncivilize this country than a century can repair. I am disposed to attribute to the same causes the growing fanaticism of England. In Ireland we had little to lose in civilization: but look at our late extravagancies, and see at least how much we have lost in our own and in the opinion of others. For years to come, I see no hope; we have the anguish of being ourselves the cause of not going forward a little in the march of the world, but of still remaining a by-word among nations. Patriotic affectation is almost as bad as personal, but I declare these things do a good deal in sinking my health, which is far from good; my spirits quite on the ground; and yet, as to Ireland, I never saw but one alternative—a bridewell or a guardhouse; with England the first, with France the other. We might have had a mollification, and the bolts lightened, and a chance of progression, but that I now give up.

I really wish the thing with myself over; and trust me that wish is not irreligious or peevish,

but rather a good humoured feeling, that, not wishing to eat more, I may be better by rising from table ; “ enough is as good as a feast.”

I am every hour more and more confirmed as to my ideas of society ; it is not for those that think or feel ; it is one fool getting on the back of many, to fly from himself. In France you can scarcely make even that experiment, for all here agree that at *the present moment* all society is dead. Nor is it wonderful that, when all the actors on the great scene are changed, the parts should be badly performed ; but still I have found society, as it is called, and met with a great deal of kindness, and some persons of talent ; but even there I found society an orchestra, where the fiddlers were putting one another out, or rather where one played a solo, and every other bow was scraped.

At this moment my friend enters ; he differs totally from my opinion, saying, “ I have lived single in a great city ; few friends, many acquaintances : I think I have done right, and shall continue. Sameness would cloy. How many happy matches have you seen ? How many faithful friendships ? Too much intimacy lays you bare ; your little infirmities diminish respect, perhaps excite disgust, perhaps end in hatred. With the same persons, and those few, what chance of having yourself, or finding in them, the attachment, the good temper, and good sense necessary for bearing and forbearing ? You have complained of being spit upon—but you can easily curse them, make a polite bow, and go away ; but that would be no cause for breaking

a closer attachment. Are you not conscious that you have observed, since we have been so much together, some faults in me not observed before? Have you no suspicion of reprisal?" All this I treated as misanthropic cant—he retorted on me, "What is your select attachment but general intolerance? What is this sirup of concentrated affection but extract from the wormwood of im-bittered irritability? When has any man ever found the male or the female inmate always equal, patient, and amiable? Or even suppose it, will not sickness or death rend the bond, and leave you or them in a desert? As to me, I can bear almost every body; the grave digger I laugh at. I cannot weep over myself when I'm gone, and I will not over any body else." He pressed me to say if I seriously thought there was nothing in these topics. I told him I had frequently been presented with them before, but was not exactly in a frame for an *ulterius concilium*. In truth, it was rather memory awakened than opinion shaken, that made me disposed to silence; but of this enough for the present.

I found myself all abaft. We agreed to go to *la chambre des députés*. One of the members chanced to have heard of my name, was extremely courteous, lamented that I should be a mere auditor, but he would take care that I should be placed according to my high worthiness. We were accordingly placed *aux premières tribunes*: the question was to be of the liberty of the press, and of a previous censorship. The baron had some difficulty in working us forward, and said how happy he was in succeeding. I

assured him I was greatly delighted by the difficulty, as it marked the just point of solicitude of the public. The chamber is very handsome; the president faces the assembly; before him is a tribune, which the orator ascends, and reads his speech with his back to the president—we waited anxiously. I thought I shared in the throb of a public heart. We observed some bustle; the seats of the interior, reserved for the members, became crowded to excess by ladies, admitted I know not how. The order for strangers to retire was read—the ladies would not stir. The president could find no remedy, and adjourned the house to next day. I was rather disgusted: the baron asked me what we would have done in England? I said we had too much respect for our ladies to permit them to remain—he shook his head: I did not understand what he meant. But does not this prove what I said a day or two ago (for this is written by starts) to be true, “that women here have only a mock respect?” if real, would they have dreamed of such a silly termagancy? Does it not mark their unfeeling coxcombry and apathy in the public interest; and how fit they are to be the mothers of the Gracchi? And yet women here are vain of their sway. I can imagine nothing more humiliating than such Saturnalian licentiousness.

However, I went next day. There was a previous list of the orators, pro and con: they mounted alternately, and read written speeches. The echo was strong; I lost much. But how can any man read his own speech? He may the speech of the dead or the absent;—it is any thing but discussion. The orator swabs his face, not-

withstanding the sedateness of the exertion ; and when he stops to drink, which is a part of the performance, the whole assembly handle their kerchiefs, and trumpet in the most perfect time and unison, to the great animation and interest of the speech, and no doubt to the great comfort of the auditors, who must have had their secretions brimful during their attention. The question will not probably be decided in many days. The press is surely the great sentinel—it gives the light to see and the tongue to speak. They say the Russians always eat the candles before they swallow the people. I can't tell you how interested I am ; I begin to doubt if man ought to be monopolized, or his taper, however dim it may be, put under the bushel of mere private confined affection. Some, it seems, are afraid of the sudden mischiefs that might arise among a volatile people, if restraint were removed too soon ; I own it never was my notion. But I know not how far these fears may be real or feigned. Such is the fate of revolutions—nothing certain but blood. The march of the captives begins through a red sea ; and, after forty years in seeking new abodes and strange gods, the leader seldom sees the promised land, or, at least, dies before his foot has touched it. What is it, here at least, but the succession of wretches doing the duty of the hangman, till it is the turn of each to be the victim ? These thoughts often console me. My dear friend, we must stay as we are ; but let us look at the history of the past and the acts of present men, and learn to be patient and modest.

You can't forget my hatred of Buonaparte ;

every thing I hear confirms it. When I went up to see his famous column at Boulogne, the poor muse I thought was left behind whispered at the moment,—

When ambition achieves her desire,
How fortune must laugh at the joke !
You mounted a pillar of fire,
You sink in a pillar of smoke.

I am greatly pleased to have this man's extinction marked by so much abject degradation. These butchers and robbers, called conquerors, have kept their vices up by the splendour of their rise or fall ; but what a fall has this man had ! He retires, instead of falling like a brave highwayman, or as Catiline did ; he dwindles into an icicle, and plays the pitiful tricks of power among fishermen and washerwomen. After losing the game of the world, he sits down, like a child, to make castles with cards. Even his military talents are questioned. They say, that having no respect for property or person, he extorted such sums of money, and thousands of men, as made resistance physically impossible, even notwithstanding an infinite number of mistakes of head and violences of temper—but here you know I am speaking without book. Still he had laid hold of the gaudiness of many, and is talked of with regret ; but his rising again is, I trust in God, impossible. I do believe the present rulers mean very well, though the king has none of the vices that might recommend him here. I believe he is well taught in the school of adversity, and has a respect for whatever is good and honest. Whether

he be bigoted, I don't know. An attempt was made to shut the shops on Sunday, and to carry the host in procession, but both failed; they were, however, desisted from with great temper.

I now regret that I did not throw upon paper the things that occurred every day; I have often regretted the omission. I would advise you to keep a journal of that kind; it will cost very little trouble, and will have the freshness of being ready gathered, not faded by forgetfulness and cold and laboured recollection. Even while I have been scribbling this, many incidents, that glowed with life at the moment, have so lost their life, that though I rolled them they threw up nothing but water, and would be rotten before they could reach you, so I ceased all attempts to revive them. I had twenty things, the first few days, to say of my host, and his wife, and his daughter. It seems they fled to Lubec at the first horrors of the revolution, and the children were born there; the girl, I thought, seemed to have a good opinion of me, and I thought her good taste ought to make amends for her want of beauty; and certainly she had brought a very scanty viaticum of charms from the north. About the end of the first week, meaning to be very sweet, she assured me I had the best English accent she ever heard, and that it was exactly the same as that of her English master. During this chat, in marches this teacher. The scoundrel is a German, who went to London at five and twenty, and returned, after four years, to teach the purity of their language in Paris. Poor girl! I turned her regimentals at the

moment, and remanded her to her ugliness. However, all is well, for she knows nothing of the crime, or the sentence, or the pardon. The father and mother are very good sort of people, and have saved me from some small impositions ; for really nothing can be so shameless and abject as the frauds upon strangers. Even at the coffee-house where I breakfast, the keeper of it, a very genteel woman, makes me almost every day pay a different price for the same thing. It is still only fair to say, the French are the civillest people upon earth, and I really believe sincerely good natured to strangers. Two nights ago I was overtaken by the national guard : I asked the officer my way ; he answered so courteously, that I ventured a question or two more ; he continued the same good nature, and the private next behind him assisted in doing the duties of hospitality. I said I was afraid he had led me to pass the line of respect to him, but his answer was, and in the kindest tone, Sir, a stranger, *comme il faut*, can never pass it in France. I doubt if I should have found it so in England. Apropos ! I am quite sure the two nations hate each other as devoutly as ever ; and I think their respective imperfections of character will be kept alive by the mutual spirit of contempt. Paris will think it graceful to be volatile, as long as London thinks it dignified to be dull.

MR. CURRAN TO D. LUBE, ESQ. DUBLIN.

MY DEAR LUBE,

Paris.

I WRITE again, because I judge from myself, and how kindly I felt your last, that you would like to hear from me : perhaps the not being able to abstain from writing to the absent is the only certain proof that distance and memory are compatible : however, the compliment is not great, when you know that I have flung myself upon you as a correspondent only at those intervals when I could not bear my own company. The thermometer has been higher here lately than at any former time. Close, dirty streets, stewing playhouses, and a burning sun, have, perhaps naturally enough, completed the extreme depression of my spirits, and made me fit for nothing. I endeavour to dissipate, by wasting myself upon spectacles—but it won't do : this day I thought to look for something gay in the catacombs. It seems all Paris stands upon a vaulted quarry, out of which the stone to build it has been taken, and it is not very rare to see an entire house sink down to its original home, and disappear. Part of this excavation has been fitted up as a residence in remainder for the grave. We went down, I think, seventy steps, and traversed more than half a mile by torch, or rather taper light, and we beheld more than 2,300,000 fragments of what once was life. They amount to four times the present population of Paris. The bones were very carefully built up, and at intervals were studded with projecting rows of skulls, with

mottos occasionally written up in Latin or French. It was a sort of caravan, mostly women : one of them asked me to translate one of those ; it was, I think, "*in nihilum revertitur quod ex nihilo fuit.*" I asked whether it gave her a sentiment of grief, or fear, or hope ? She asked me what room I could see for hope in a parcel of empty skulls ? " For that reason, madam, and because you know they cannot be filled with grief or fear, for all subject of either is passed." She replied, "*Oui, et cependant c'est jolie.*" I could not guess to what she applied the epithet, so I raised the taper to her face, which I had not looked at before, and had it been any thing but the mirror of death, I should have thought she had looked into it, and applied the one reflection to the other, so perfectly unimpressed was her countenance. It did not raise her in my mind, though she was not ill looking ; and when I met her above ground, after our resurrection, she appeared fit enough for the drawing rooms of the world, though not for the under cellar. I don't remember ever to have had my mind compressed into so narrow a space : so many human beings, so many actors, so many sufferers, so various in human rank, so equalized in the grave ! When I stared at the congregation, I could not distinguish what head had raved, or reasoned, or hoped, or burned. I looked for thought, I looked for dimples,—I asked whither is all gone—did wisdom never flow from your lips, nor affection hang upon them—and if both or either, which was the most exalting—which the most fascinating ? All silent. They left me to answer for them, " So shall the fairest face appear."

I was full of the subject. In the evening I went to distract at the comedy of *La Misanthrope*, the best of Moliere. The severe affliction of *Alceste*, and the heartless coquetry of *Celimene*, were excellently done. It is not only tragedy that weeps—*Golgotha* was still an incubus upon me. I saw the moral of the piece went far beyond the stage—it only began there. Every good play ought to be just in the particular fable. It ought also (to be useful) to have a general analogy far more extensive and equally exact. *Alceste* is man in the abstract—*Celimene* is the object of his wish, whatever that may be; she smiles, and caresses, and promises. He thinks he feels the blood in her heart, for he mistakes the pulse of his own for that of hers; he embraces the phantom, or thinks he does so, but is betrayed, and opens his eyes upon the desert: at the moment he does not recollect the loss to him is little; 'tis only the loss of himself—to her it is nothing, for it is made up in the next conscription; and, at all events, whether sick or wounded, the march of man's warfare is never suspended; the moving infirmary never halts, and every day brings him a stage nearer *à la Barrière d'Enfer*, the entrance of the Catacombs.

This sad subject naturally turns me to another, that makes me suspect that my contempt of this world is not quite sincere. I mean the poor extravasated Irish that I meet here: I meet their ghosts as I pass, and view them as *Eneas* did:—

Quas abstulit atra dies et funere miscet acerbo.

How can I affect to despise a scene where my heart bleeds for every sufferer? I wish to dis-

perse my feelings as a citizen of the world, and break my own monopoly of them, but they all come back to our unhappy country. One of the most beautiful touches of the prince of sensitive poets is where he tinges the wanderings of Dido with patriotism :—

—— Sæpe longum incommitata videtur
Ire viam et Tyrios deserta quærere terra.

By the by, it does some credit to the character of humanity that we sometimes exchange the sufferings of egotism for a nobler sympathy, and lament over others instead of keeping all our tears for ourselves. What exquisite nectar must they be to those over whom they are shed ! Nor perhaps should the assurance that they don't suffer alone be always withheld, because it may not be always true ; because, for the purpose of consolation, it is enough if it be believed, whether true or not : if the payment is complete, is it worth while to inquire whether the coin be counterfeit or not ? But with respect to our poor exiles the sympathy is most sincere as well as ardent : I had hopes that England might let them back. The season and the power of mischief is long past ; the number is almost too small to do credit to the mercy that casts a look upon them. But they are destined to give their last recollection of the green fields they are never more to behold, on a foreign death bed, and to lose the sad delight of fancied visits to them in a distant grave—* * * *

* * *—.

I continue to feel an increasing dislike of every thing here ; I probably shan't remain long. I

have left some things in Ireland unsettled that I must arrange, however I may dispose of myself hereafter. England can't arrest me long; I have never found any good in watering places. My malady, a constitutional dejection, can hope for no remedy in water or in wine. In general, the benefit of those places is attributed to the attendant temperance, but a person little given to excess any where has not much to add in that way; and as to evening parties, in a crowd of strangers, I never liked them, nor was fit for them: I have therefore given my evenings to the theatres—I prefer them to English, notwithstanding the difficulty of a foreign language. I prefer the style of their stage to ours: ours always appeared to me flat and dull, with never more than one or two of tolerable merit; on the contrary, here you never find any very bad. A comic nation is perpetually sending young aspirants to Paris, where of course there can be no dearth. In England you must put up with what you can get. No doubt, it is hard to find any exact principles of acting; 'tis in a great degree arbitrary and accidental—still nature will assert certain boundaries. In France there may be bombast and tinsel, and the eternal monotony of amour in their plays is liable to objections, lying much deeper than the mere criticism of the stage; it goes vitally to the morals and manners of the people—it goes to make the woman a bad sort of man, and the man a bad sort of woman—it goes to take away the solid basis of every virtue of either sex: it leaves the man little to wish, to the woman little to bestow; it annihilates the fine

spirit of attachment. What can he feel for confidences given on a principle of good breeding? To fascinate, there must be no doubt of its being exclusive. When I am writing my bad verses, I would spurn the muse, if I suspected her of whispering the same idea to twenty other poetasters. On the same principle, if you have only the sixty-fourth of a ticket in the lottery of regard, the prize is in fact a blank. How can you join in triumph with sixty-three other fortunate adventurers? Still these exhibitions amuse; the acting is flippant and graceful, and the music sometimes excellent. The English, who have no national music, affect to despise French. It is somewhat, perhaps, tinselish; but I own it frequently catches my fancy, and even my heart. * * * * *

I am not sorry for having come hither when I did—perhaps you see society better when cut into piecemeal, as in anatomy every thing is laid bare to the student—perhaps it is seen to great disadvantage. The best lesson that man can learn is toleration, and travelling ought to be the best school. There are many points in which this people must be allowed praise—lively, cheerful—a constitutional philosophy, disposing them to be always satisfied. I wish, as to government, they could be brought to an anchor,—whether this is to happen, who can tell? Nothing can be more divided than the general sentiment: the higher military men have got safe into harbour, and wish perhaps for quiet—all under them most discontented—long arrears due. They can't employ them abroad, for want of money: and when the devil is raised, and can't

be kept in work—we know the story. The favour to Buonaparte is the more singular, because, allowing for his extraordinary energy, I doubt if he had a single great quality. It is clear he was no statesman; force alone was sufficient for all he did. Men here of the best authority pronounce him a man of uncommon energy in action, but of no talent for retreat. The question is of more curiosity than moment. If otherwise, it might be easy to know what credit to give to these criticisms.

22d.—At last we have got our passports, and ordered a carriage for to-morrow. We shall go by Dieppe. Neither my fellow traveller nor myself in the best health or spirits: I have a great kindness for him, though no human beings can be more different. I don't think diversity is incompatible with friendship or affection; but strong contrariety, I fear, is. How different are they from the volatility of France, as well as from the loud, ardent, indiscreet vehemence of our poor people. Certainly it is not mere interest that forms the weight to the clock, though the utter want of any regulating power makes it a sad timepiece. But I consider it now as merely a "conclamatum est," and the insurrection act little other than a monumental inscription.

London.—Tuesday.—(A new venue).—After a day spent at Dieppe, we sailed; and, after forty hours, landed at Brighton. I don't like the state of my health; if it was merely *maladie* under sailing orders for the undiscovered country, I should not quarrel with the passport. There is nothing gloomy in my religious impressions,

though I trust they are not shallow: I ought to have been better—I know also that others have been as blamable; and I have rather a cheerful reliance upon mercy than an abject fear of justice. Or were it otherwise, I have a much greater fear of suffering than of death.

I had almost made up my mind to bestow a citizen to France, and I am mortified at finding any drag upon the intention—yet a drag there is. I have no doubt that the revolution has thrown that country a century back, yet she has qualities that might have hoped a better destiny. It has been suggested to me, that a winter in Paris might answer better.

I just now return from a long conversation with the truly royal personage (*the D. of Sussex*) who saves you the postage of this. A few days must, I think, take me across.—I think of meeting some persons at Cheltenham. As to waters, I suspect they are seldom of use. I am quite decided against them, till Charon pledges me on the Styx. Yours, very truly,

J. P. CURRAN.

MRS. BRUNTON TO HER MOTHER.

Nov. 21, 1809.

FROM Carlisle we took a different route to the lakes from that which I formerly went with you. We drove, through a country as flat as the floor, to a little village called Wigton; and from thence to Keswick by a tremendous road; but leading at last through the vale of Bassenthwaite, one of the sweetest of all *prairies riantes*.

The day which we spent at Keswick was the finest possible—not a breath of wind, and scarcely a cloud on the sky. We sailed and wandered about till it was quite dark. Great was my desire to take up our rest there for a fortnight; for in “The Grange,” the sweet little hamlet at the mouth of Borodale, there were a parlour and bedchamber to be let furnished.—Dread Lowdore is the most *picturesque* waterfall I ever saw; but no more to be compared with Moness in magnificence than a little coquette, tricked out in gauze and gumflowers, with the simple majesty of Milton’s Eve.

We went, as formerly, by Ambleside to Kendal. The lakes are truly lovely, though not quite so unparalleled as when I last saw them; for I have since seen Loch Lomond; nor do I think they can once be compared in sublimity with the approach to Loch Katrine.

Did you ever see Kirkby Lonsdale? It is the most rural, pretty, interesting place imaginable. It is a true English village—English in its neatness—English in the handsomeness of its houses (Scotch handsome houses are seldom built in villages)—and English, above all, in its churchyard—smooth as velvet—green as emeralds—clean, even to the exclusion of a fallen leaf from one of the tall trees that surround it. From this churchyard, situate on a high bank overhanging the river Lune, you command a fine view of Lonsdale, rising here and there into gentle swells—gay with woods and villas. The river is not very English; but it is a rapid, lively, transparent stream—not creeping sluggishly through rich meadows, but dancing gaily to the sun, or dash-

ing against tiny rocks into Lilliputian waves.
* * * *

Nous voilà at Harrowgate; and I believe there is no place in Britain to which you would not sooner accompany us. One hundred and forty people dine with us daily—all dressed as fine as Punch's wife in the puppet-show. Do but imagine the noise of so many tongues—the bouncing, banging, and driving of eighty waiting men—the smell of meat sufficient for a hundred and forty cormorants—and all this in the dog-days!! * * *

Harrowgate itself is a straggling village, built on an ugly, sandy common, surrounded with stunted black Scotch firs—the only thing in shape of tree or shrub that never can be an ornament to any possible place. From a hill above Harrowgate, there is a view of prodigious extent, over the richest and largest plain which I have ever seen.—York, which is twenty-two miles distant, seems nearer than the middle of the landscape. Mrs. I., who is an Englishwoman, was in ecstasies. For my part, I must confess, that I think a little rising ground, or even a mountain, no bad feature in a landscape. A scene without a hill seems to me to be about as interesting as a face without a nose!

MRS. BRUNTON TO MRS. IZETT.

April 10, 1810.

It is even so! You are sixty miles distant from Edinburgh, and I have lost what probably no time will restore to me; that “medicine of life,” which it is promised that they shall find who have received a title to yet higher rewards.

Since you left me I have a hundred times determined to write. I need not assure you that forgetfulness has had no share in my silence. Levity itself would not forget a friend (if levity could have a friend) in one month—"one little month!" I am reminded of you by all my business and all my pleasures; for which of all my pleasures did not you heighten—and in what branch of duty did not you stimulate me? But all that is over! and I can only repent that I did not better use what might have been so eminently useful.

I thank you heartily for your account of your rambles at Kinnaird—would that I were the companion of them! In return, you shall learn my methodical routine. I write part of every forenoon, and walk for an hour or two before dinner. I lounge over the fire with a book, or I sew and chat all the evening.

Your friend Laura proceeds with a slow but regular pace; a short step every day—no more! She has advanced sixty paces, alias pages, since you left her. She is at present very comfortably situate, if the foolish thing had the sense to think so; she is on a visit to Norwood, there she is to remain for a few days; and a very snug old fashioned place it is! Though it should never be laid open to the public at large, you shall see the interior of it one day or other.

Last Thursday I paid a visit to a very different habitation—our chateau at St. Leonard's; though nothing has as yet the least tinge of green, it did not look very ill. It is as gay as ten thousand purple crocuses, and twice as many yellow ones can make it. I shall soon grow impatient to take possession, and, if we can manage it, I

believe we shall revert to our old plan of going there early ; if not, I must console myself with my friend Laura in Edinburgh. I wish I saw the end of her ; but " wilds immeasurably spread seem lengthening as I go."

If ever I undertake another lady, I will manage her in a very different manner. Laura is so decently kerchiefed, like our grandmothers, that to dress her is a work of time and pains. Her younger sister, if she ever have one, shall wear loose, floating, easy robes, that will slip on in a minute. * * *

As for ——'s new production, I believe I shall never have any personal acquaintance with it. It is an " Historical Romance"—a sort of composition to which I have a strong dislike. Fiction disguises the simplicity, and destroys the usefulness of the true history ; and the recollection of the true history deprives me of all history in the fiction. Besides, the foundation of ——'s tale is a history as well known as that of the deluge ; and she professes to adhere closely to truth, only dramatizing a little. Now, this " dramatizing" is an undertaking too arduous for mortals. Shakspeare himself has, in some degree, failed in it ; historical plays are, indeed, the most *amusing* of histories ; perhaps, as far as mere character is concerned, the most *faithful*. But he is sadly encumbered with the facts ; and no part whatever of the interest of these plays arises from the plot ; so, at least, it appears to me. Now —— and all other misses, must pardon me, if I think that ladies are more likely to make their works interesting by well imagined incident than by masterly delineation of character. Ladies have,

indeed, succeeded in delineating real life; a very few of them have done so; but it has been rather in pictures of manners than of character. But — has slender materials for a picture of manners; and let your theory of female genius forgive me for doubting her power of giving interest to a story, the catastrophe of which is not to be forgotten. * * *

We *old* folks make friends slowly—so slowly, that I believe life will be too short to furnish me with another such as you; therefore I value you accordingly. I hope we shall be near neighbours in another world; or that, if your place be, as it well may, a higher one than mine, you will not be forbidden to visit the meaner mansions of our Father's house. * * *

I am going to visit the woman that is come to No. 6. I believe I shall hate her; yet they say she is a pleasant person enough. If she sits in the same place where you used to work, I think I shall beat her. They say narrow-minded people always hate their successors; I must be the most illiberal of all creatures, for I hate the successors of my friends. * * * You see my paper is done—so, of course, is my letter.

MRS. BRUNTON TO MRS. IZETT.

St. Leonard's, Aug. 30, 1810.

IF I have not answered your two letters, blame not me, who had all the will in the world to do so, nor Mr. B., who has teased me every day to write to you. Blame your dear friend and favourite, Montague de Courcy, of Norwood,

Esq., for he has been wholly and solely in fault. He has been making love so energetically, that I had not the heart to leave him in the middle of his flames ; more especially as he had been interrupted by a score of troublesome visitors breaking in upon his privacy. To say the truth, I have been far more compassionate towards him than she who ought to have been the most deeply interested. She has not only given him his congé, but has barbarously left him, in a cold October evening, standing under a tree in his own avenue. There he has stood since last night ; there he must stand all to-day, for to-day I write to you ; all to-morrow, for to-morrow I go to town ; and all Thursday, for I do not return till then. The thirtieth chapter is closed, and I mean that six more should bring all things to their proper issue. If I write *every* day, and *all* day, that may be done in fifty days. But I find that in one way and another, half my time is abstracted from my business, as I now begin to consider this affair, at first begun for pastime ! Besides, I must take more exercise, if I would not be sick ; and must sew more, if I would not be ragged.

I admit not an iota of what you are so polite to Mr. M. as to call his *reasoning* ; I must be allowed to call it *sophistry*, since it was at best only a just conclusion upon wrong premises. Selfish we should indeed be, if we rejoiced in the prosperity of our friends merely because it promotes our own happiness. But the question remains, " Why does it promote our happiness, while we expect from it no personal advantage ? " Why, but because we are not selfish ? Why, but because an unvitiated mind has a faculty for

enjoying pleasure, which acts antecedently to any interested consideration? This faculty you have, I believe, in full perfection; give it free exercise. It is the noblest of your faculties; that which assimilates you the most to Him, who, without needing any creature, being all sufficient for his own blessedness, yet willeth the happiness of every thing that lives. They who ascribe all kindly feelings to selfishness would blot out the last faint traces of the image in which man was made—would destroy the last wreck of the crown which has fallen from our head.

But as for the subject which led you to metaphysics, I believe it will be for your advantage to make it an exception from your general habits of sympathy; since I believe it is likely to lead you into more of pain than of pleasure. The “love,” the “admiration,” the “esteem,” which you anticipate for your friend, she will never obtain unless in your imagination. My hopes of popular favour are low—very low indeed. Of a work like mine, the wise and the good will not be at the trouble to judge. Its faults are not such as will recommend it to the vulgar. It *may* become popular, for that is a mere lottery. If it do, be assured, my dear friend, its faults, of which it has many, will draw down the censure of those who are, or who think themselves entitled to decide for their neighbours. Now, will not one bitter sarcasm on it, much more on its author, give you more real vexation than the praise of nine-tenths of novel readers will give you pleasure? I judge by myself; for, while I have little pleasure in praise, I am on many subjects keenly alive to censure. Many a person

less generally vain than I, has felt all the touchy vanity of authorship.

But I am positive that no part—no, not the smallest part—of my happiness can ever arise from the popularity of my book, further than as I think it may be useful. I would rather, as you well know, glide through the world unknown, than have (I will not call it *enjoy*) fame, however brilliant. To be pointed at—to be noticed and commented upon—to be suspected of literary airs—to be shunned, as literary women are, by the most unpretending of my own sex ; and abhorred, as literary women are, by the more pretending of the other !—My dear, I would sooner exhibit as a rope-dancer—I would a great deal rather take up my abode by that lone loch on the hill, to which Mr. I. carried my husband on the day when the mosquitoes were so victorious against him.

All these things considered, pray transfer your sympathy to some other circumstance of my lot. Rejoice with me that I have the finest peas and cauliflowers in Scotland ; and, moreover, the most beautiful apple tree that can be seen. * * *

You say you expect that I should tell you your faults. With all my heart ! I will tell you two in a breath. In the first place, you are far too sanguine in expecting strange good fortune to befall your friends, You not only look for roses in the wilderness, but roses without thorns. Take my word for it, you may have, if you choose, the thorns without the roses ; but the converse will never do. The next fault—and a sad one it is—is, that you constantly refer

to my letters, as if I should remember what I write. Now, I protest that I retain no more recollection of any letter I have written you since you went to Kinnaird, than I do of the ceremonies of my baptism. So if you think it necessary to answer categorically you must tell me my observation as well as your reply. * * *

This letter writing is but a poor affair after all. It carries on just such a conversation as we should do, if you were not to answer me till I had forgotten what I had said; turning your back to me too all the while you were speaking. A *triste* enough *confab.* you will allow. * * *

MRS. BRUNTON TO MRS. BALFLOUR.

March 21, 1812.

THE beginning of this month was delightful, and the hedges were just going to burst into leaf; when, behold, this week we have snow a foot thick, and to-day it is again falling without intermission, accompanied by a tremendous gale. It is well for those who, like you and me, have comfortable homes, and affectionate inmates of them. Let it snow on now, and so perhaps we may escape it in April, when it would spoil all the fruit crops at St. Leonard's, and kill all the lambs in Elgar Holm. I hope, too, that it may serve instead of the May fogs, which would dimly eclipse my views in travelling to London.

You would smile if you knew how much I am bent on this journey, and, perhaps, with some latent self-complacency, you would say, "Well, well, I would not give the sight of little Thomas

fondling his sister for all the sights in London." But consider, my dear, that I have no Maries nor Thomases. When I leave home, I carry all that makes the *soul* of home with me ; I leave nothing behind but walls and furniture ; and when I return, I bring back materials for enlivening my fireside.

To tell the truth, I believe nobody was ever better formed for enjoying life than I, saving and excepting in the construction of an abominable stomach ; for I delight in travelling, yet can be happy at home. I enjoy company, yet prefer retirement. I can look with rapture on the glorious features of nature—the dark lake—the rugged mountain—the roaring cataract—yet gaze with no small pleasure on the contents of a haberdasher's window. * * *

May God grant that, as long as I have friends, I may have a heart to love them ; that I may never be loose from the sacred charities of kindred, nor stand alone in a world peopled with my brethren. I trust I shall always love you all, and I hope I shall always have a little corner in all your hearts. I particularize "you," lest you should fancy that "all" meant all my brethren of mankind. Now, I should wish to love them all, to be sure ; but truly, I have no great hopes. Yet I think I would willingly serve any one, provided I were allowed to tell him plainly and roundly that I thought him a rogue or a fool, if that happened to be my opinion at the time.

LORD BYRON TO M. H. BEYLE.

SIR,

Genoa, May 29, 1823.

At present, that I know to whom I am indebted for a very flattering mention in the "Rome, Naples, and Florence in 1817, by Mons. Stendhal," it is fit that I should return my thanks (however undesired or undesirable) to Mons. Beyle, with whom I had the honour of being acquainted at Milan in 1816. You only did me too much honour in what you were pleased to say in that work; but it has hardly given me less pleasure than the praise itself, to become at length aware (which I have done by mere accident) that I am indebted for it to one of whose good opinion I was really ambitious. So many changes have taken place since that period in the Milan circle, that I hardly dare recur to it;—some dead, some banished, and some in Austrian dungeons.—Poor Pellico! I trust that, in his iron solitude, his Muse is consoling him in part—one day to delight us again, when both she and her poet are restored to freedom.

Of your works I have only seen "Rome, Naples, and Florence," &c.; the Lives of Haydn and Mozart, and the *brochure* on Racine and Shakspeare. The "Histoire de la Peinture," I have not yet the good fortune to possess,

There is one part of your observations in the pamphlet which I shall venture to remark upon;—it regards Walter Scott. You say that "his character is little worthy of enthusiasm," at the same time that you mention his productions in the

manner they deserve. I have known Walter Scott long and well, and in occasional situations which call forth the *real* character—and I can assure you that his character is worthy of admiration—that of all men he is the most open, the most honourable, the most amiable. With his politics I have nothing to do; they differ from mine. But he is perfectly sincere in them; and sincerity may be humble, but she cannot be servile. I pray you, therefore, to correct or soften that passage. You may, perhaps, attribute this officiousness of mine to a false affectation of candour, as I happen to be a writer also. Attribute it to what motive you please, but believe the truth. I say that Walter Scott is as nearly a thorough good man as man can be, because I *know* it by experience to be the case.

If you do me the honour of an answer, may I request a speedy one?—because it is possible (though not yet decided) that circumstances may conduct me once more to Greece. My present address is Genoa, where an answer will reach me in a short time, or be forwarded to wherever I may be.

I beg you to believe me, with a lively recollection of our brief acquaintance, and the hope of one day renewing it, your ever obliged and obedient humble servant,

NOEL BYRON.

LORD BYRON TO JOHN MURRAY, ESQ.

Missolonghi, Feb. 25, 1824.

I HAVE heard from Mr. Douglas Kinnaird that you state a report of a satire on Mr. Gifford having arrived from Italy, said to be written by *me*, but that *you* do not believe it; I dare say you do not, nor any body else, I should think. Whoever asserts that I am the author or abettor of any thing of the kind on Gifford lies in his throat; I always regarded him as my literary father, and myself as his prodigal son. If any such composition exists, it is none of mine. *You* know, as well as any body, upon *whom* I have or have not written, and *you* also know whether they do or did not deserve the same—and so much for such matters.

You will, perhaps, be anxious to hear some news from this part of Greece (which is most liable to invasion), but you will hear enough through public and private channels on that head. I will, however, give you the events of a week, mingling my own private peculiar with the public, for we are here jumbled a little together at present.

On Sunday (the 15th I believe) I had a strong and sudden convulsive attack which left me speechless, though not motionless, for some strong men could not hold me; but whether it was epilepsy, catalepsy, cachexy, apoplexy, or what other *exy* or *epsy*, the doctors have not decided, or whether it was spasmodic, or nervous, &c., but it was very unpleasant, and nearly carried me off, and all that. On Monday, they put

leeches to my temples, no difficult matter, but the blood could not be stopped till eleven at night (they had gone too near the temporal artery for my temporal safety), and neither styptic nor caustic would cauterize the orifice till after a hundred attempts.

On Tuesday, a Turkish brig of war ran on shore. On Wednesday, great preparations being made to attack her, though protected by her consorts, the Turks burned her, and retired to Patras. On Thursday, a quarrel ensued between the Suliotes and the Frank guard at the arsenal; a Swedish officer was killed, and a Suliote severely wounded, and a general fight expected, and with some difficulty prevented. On Friday, the officer was buried, and Captain Parry's English artificers mutinied, under pretence that their lives were in danger, and are for quitting the country—they may. On Saturday we had the smartest shock of an earthquake which I remember (and I have felt thirty, slight or smart, at different periods; they are common in the Mediterranean), and the whole army discharged their arms, upon the same principle that savages beat drums, or howl, during an eclipse of the moon: it was a rare scene altogether. If you had but seen the English Johnnies, who had never been out of a Cockney workshop before, nor will again if they can help it! And on Sunday, we heard that the Vizier is come down to Larissa with one hundred and odd thousand men.

In coming here I had two escapes, one from the Turks (one of my vessels was taken, but afterwards released), and the other from shipwreck;

we drove twice on the rocks near the Scrophes (islands near the coast).

I have obtained from the Greeks the release of eight-and-twenty Turkish prisoners, men, women, and children, and sent them to Patras and Prevesa at my own charges. One little girl of nine years old, who proposes remaining with me, I shall (if I live) send with her mother, probably, to Italy, or to England, and adopt her. Her name is Hato Hatagee; she is a very pretty lively child. All her brothers were killed by the Greeks, and she herself and her mother were spared by special favour, and owing to her extreme youth, she being then but five or six years old.

My health is rather better, and I can ride about again. My office here is no sinecure—so many parties and difficulties of every kind; but I will do what I can. Prince Mavrocordati is an excellent person, and does all in his power; but his situation is perplexing in the extreme: still we have great hopes of the success of the contest. You will hear, however, more of public news from plenty of quarters, for I have little time to write. Believe me, yours, &c. &c.

N. B.

FINIS.

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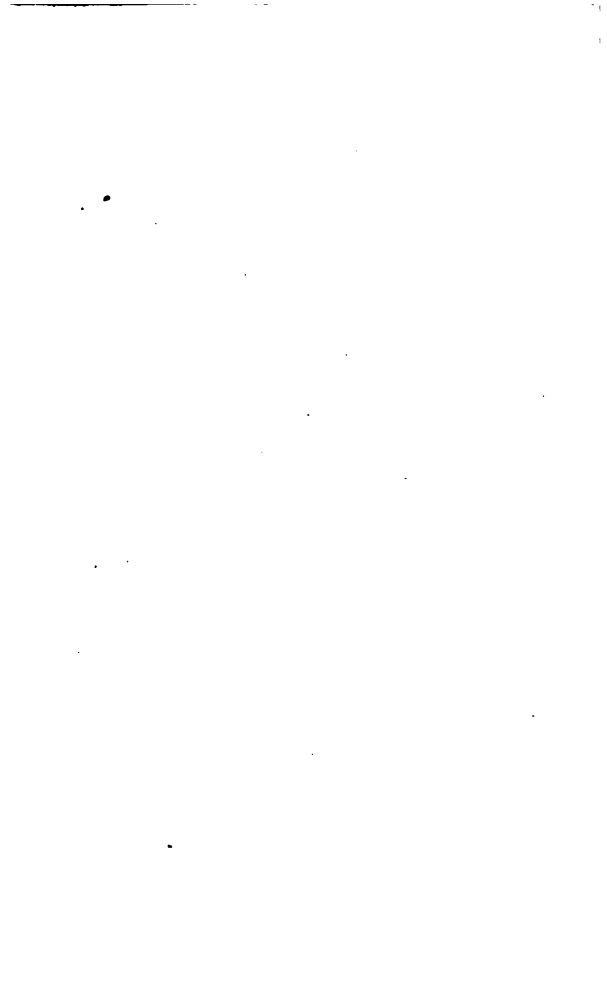
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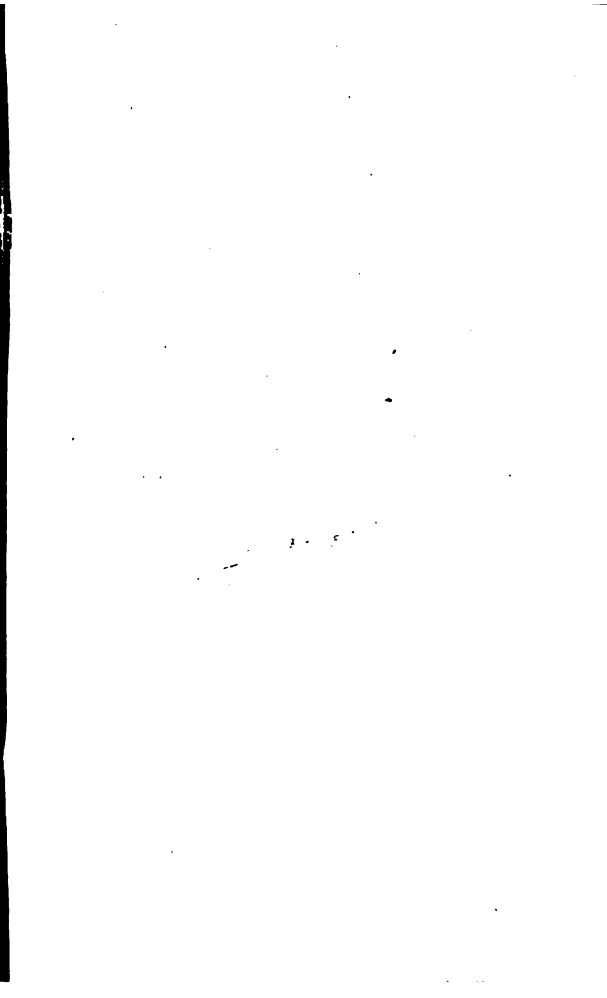
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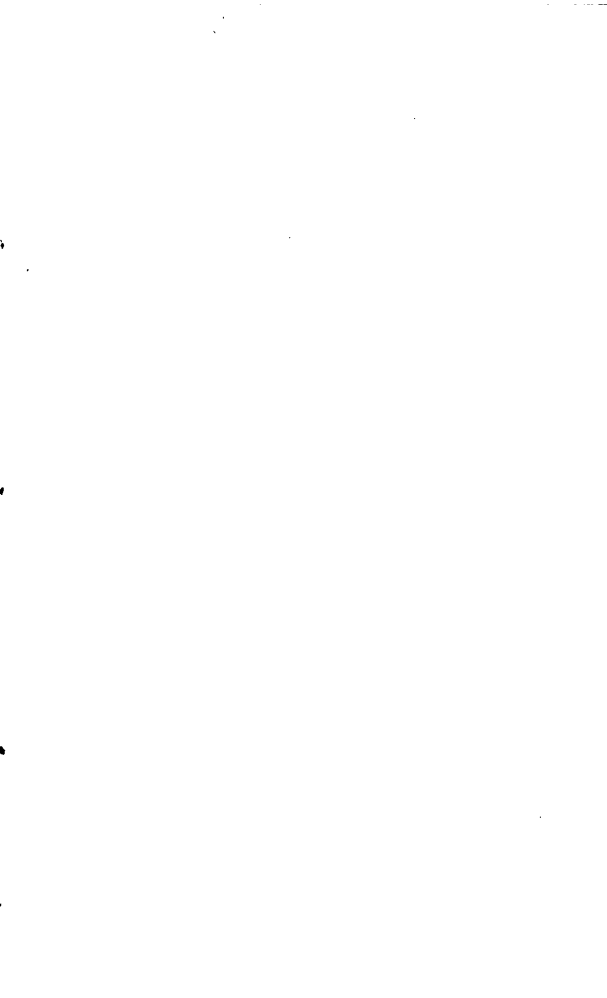




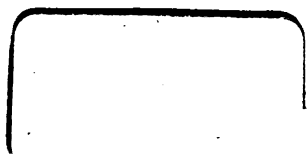














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